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Dear Carnival ...



The Carnival is a superb festival of music and dancing. As a celebration of community spirit it has a way of bringing out the best in everyone. The fun, colour and exuberance of this event is a wonderful advertisement for London.

Congratulations to everyone who has helped organise Carnival. I hope that it enjoys all the success – and the weather – of last year.

Tony Blair MP

Notting Hill Carnival makes a unique contribution to the cultural life of our country and I applaud the colour and spectacle it brings to our capital city. I believe it has made a tremendous contribution to the growth of a strong multicultural heritage we can all be proud of.

I wish everyone involved in Carnival, both participants and spectators, a most enjoyable weekend.

The Prime Minister

The huge success of the Notting Hill Carnival, which continues to get bigger and better every year, is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all those involved.

The Carnival is a magnificent festival which not only highlights the Caribbean culture and personality but also draws together people of different backgrounds and races into a celebration of our rich cultural diversity.

Paddy Ashdown MP

Against the ominous backdrop of ethnic conflict and rising race hate politics in much of Europe, Carnival stands out like a joyous beacon of hope and unity. It has established itself as the fullest expression of life in our capital city, a contribution to a better Britain that tells everyone differences are to be shared, not denied, and enjoyed, not suppressed.

Carnival continues to go from strength to strength, thanks to the dedicated work of all involved. Long may you continue to give so much pleasure to so many.

*Herman Ouseley,
Commission for Racial Equality*

I welcome Carnival once again to the streets of Notting Hill and the Royal Borough of Kensington. This is one of the great events of London's calendar. Long may it flourish!

*Dudley Fishburn MP,
Royal Borough of Kensington*

The Notting Hill Carnival is now recognised throughout the world as a truly magnificent and colourful spectacle and I congratulate everyone who has worked so hard to establish its joyful and exciting nature. You should be really proud of your efforts and achievement.

Carnival is now enjoyed by hundreds of thousands for the expression of friendship and goodwill so aptly demonstrated through the music and stunning costumes. It represents a unique opportunity to show the world everything that is good about life.

I am delighted to send my sincere greetings to Carnival again this year and to wish everyone all success for a happy, safe and fulfilling time.

*Sir Paul Condon,
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis*

For many people in this country, Notting Hill and Carnival are inextricably linked. The Carnival weekend is undoubtedly a highlight of the cultural life of the capital.

I know many of those participating devote long hours to the preparation of their costumes and the floats, resulting in a flood of visitors to Notting Hill. To all of them, and organisers and everybody else involved in this unique street celebration of the multicultural life of this country, I send sincere congratulations and best wishes for a successful Carnival '94.

*Stephen Dorrell MP,
Secretary of State for National Heritage*

Carnival is a wonderful slice of our culture and heritage to all who come along. Everybody should offer their full support by going down and enjoying the days with all the family.

*John Fashanu,
Wimbledon FC*



A TIME TO CELEBRATE



Uniting Britain for a just society



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From the Chair

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL has reached a milestone in 1994. Twenty nine years of Carnival. Little did those who participated in the first Carnival envisage that it would one day become the unifying force it is today.

Spawned out of a nostalgic desire to recreate a little bit of Trinidad in Ladbroke Grove, it has come to represent and embody the deepest feelings of loyalty, community and pride for African Caribbeans, Africans and all the other cultures making an input.

History teaches us that Carnival evolved as a victory over oppression. Imagine if you can, slaves running out onto the streets in song and dance proclaiming their liberation and seizing the right to walk the streets as 'freemen', equal in every respect. Carnival is a celebration of our liberation. A celebration of the equality of all races.

For us as a people, Carnival is spiritual - the embodiment of our sense of being and purpose.

The Carnival is not just a 'legalised rave' as it has been dubbed by those who do not know. It is not just an occasion to make a quick buck or to meet old friends, it is more, much more. It deserves our respect, it must be treated with reverence and those who developed the tradition must be remembered.

Lest we forget, millions have lost their lives in pursuit of liberty and millions more will do so in time if mankind continues to want to assert 'superiority over others'. Every race, every creed has faith in liberty.

Each year we put to our community the steady stream of developments in Carnival and we are at the point where we can proudly boast of increased credibility and increased numbers coming to share in this, our greatest celebration. Notting Hill Carnival Limited is the custodian of the ethos of Carnival with the mandate to nurture and develop it not just for the present but also for the future generations.

A few years ago we told you that 'the surest way to predict the future is to invent it'. That is what we have been doing by working systematically to our Five Year Development and Business Plan. We are now in the fourth year of the plan and at the stage where we should be looking forward to the development of a new plan to impact on the next five years.

In recent times much emphasis has been placed on the economics of Carnival. With one and a half million people on the streets over the course of the two days, Carnival is big business. But whose business? The role of this company is to persevere in developing the economic interests and to capitalise on them for the benefit of the community while at the same time ensuring that the cultural content of Carnival remains intact.

The range of issues to be dealt with in organising Carnival is very wide indeed. It is almost impossible to comprehend the sort of planning that is necessary for two days of Carnival activity. Without input from the Carnival disciplines - Mas, Pan, Static Sounds, Mobile Sounds and Calypso there would be no Carnival. Without input from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the Metropolitan Police, the British Transport Police, London Underground Limited, St John Ambulance, London Fire and Civil Defence Authority and the City of Westminster there would be no Carnival.

We extend our wholehearted thanks to all those who are involved in the production of Carnival and emphasise that Carnival is about teamwork, so let 'team spirit' prevail at all times. We all have an interest in protecting our Carnival and building its reputation as the event where goodwill and reconciliation prevail.

As the stability of the Carnival process becomes more apparent, we look forward to better and more positive media promotion of our culture. In 1993, television crews from all over the world were here to transmit highlights of Carnival. Our community rose to the occasion producing their 'best ever' production of Carnival. In 1994 we aim to surpass that standard of 'best ever' and achieve the standard of 'better than best'.

We are proud of the fact that we are able to boast our links with the Evening Standard, London's only evening paper. Our association with them enables us to emphasise and boast increased credibility for the event and its importance to the cultural life of London.

Our sincerest thanks to the Evening Standard for their distribution of the Carnival Magazine. In 1989, 7000 Carnival magazines were distributed, now in 1994, 600,000 are being distributed, spreading the Carnival culture to a wider readership. What an achievement!

The themes from the various costume bands have grown to incorporate new technology and new cultures. The music produced by both the static and mobile sound systems can only be described as 'wicked and bad', meaning 'better than best'. Together we will make 1994 a year to remember, one of peace, joy and wild celebration.

'Together we aspire, Together we achieve and its bound to be a success'.

Let us all celebrate this 30th pilgrimage, this Carnival that is forged from the love of liberty.

Claire Holder, Chair, NCL

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Mike Phillips sees a new British pageantry evolving on Notting Hill's street

So, whose Carni

THE NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL isn't cut to any sort of pattern. Even if there was one it wouldn't fit, because Carnival has its own peculiar origins and it grew out of them in its own peculiar way. It's unique.

It shares certain things with the other famous carnivals – Rio, Trinidad, New Orleans. Its origins are to be found in the pressure experienced by Afro-Caribbeans in a hostile environment, and it became a medium for expressing an identity which was partly African, partly fuelled by a high-octane splash of Latin temperament. But Notting Hill, like all the others, is unique. Its origins may have been a medium for expressing the feelings and identity of Afro-Caribbeans in West London, but over the years it's become much more.

In the last decade the Notting Hill Carnival has become London's largest public festival, an important tourist attraction and a major asset both to Notting Hill and to London itself. It has also begun to make a significant contribution to the

of the Carnival, is more or less irrelevant. The problem is that, in the real world, it's an argument about power and control which determines how the Carnival will develop.

One way of looking at the matter is to say that, as the Carnival has grown larger and more diverse it has begun to outgrow the control of its original owners – the Afro-Caribbeans – and along with that loss of control goes the possibility that it will lose its unique character.

It's become traditional in some quarters to refer to the fact that the Carnival is now locked into an organisational network where local authorities control such matters as licences, the police control public order and the size and geography of the event, while the participants, whoever they are, control the nature of their contributions. That is to say, various people are defining various bits of the Carnival without much reference to its other components, but nobody's running the whole show.

– the processional spectacle.

Most of the revellers won't be greatly concerned about this. But it is the procession of bands and costumes which gives the Carnival its historical continuity, and offers it a mechanism for a continuing and structured growth. Without the bands and their costumes the Carnival would lose its unique identity, narrow its accessibility, and become simply another event on the youth culture calendar.

At this moment there seems to be little danger of the procession withering away, but each succeeding year produces so many changes that it would be shortsighted to ignore the fact that preserving this element for the future will require a new effort of organisation.

There is a precedent. Between the late 60s and the early 70s the Carnival expanded enormously to fill up Portobello Road and the surrounding streets. These were the years of rage and street fighting. But at the time it was obvious to everyone that



"You might say the Notting Hill Carnival, is, by definition, beyond control."

national psyche, part of the way that the English see themselves.

For instance, when the Queen recently opened the Channel Tunnel one of the important elements in the celebrations in Kent was what the local papers described as a 'Notting Hill-style festival', complete with the participation of Notting Hill bands and designers like Larry Forde, which highlights the fact that the only alternative to Royal and militaristic pageantry created in Britain since the last war is the pageantry of the Carnival. In this sense it has become an authentic British festival – a hybrid, perhaps, but a hybrid which grew out of peculiarly British experience.

Like any good hybrid the Notting Hill Carnival consists of two different parts which complement and nourish each other. One element is the procession and costume parade. The other is the biggest street party in Europe.

To most people the street party represents the accessible face of the Carnival, and the sound systems have become the focus of the crowds which jump up behind them. For these revellers, whether they're tourists or London youths the perennial argument about which section of the community possesses the moral ownership

But isn't this precisely what gives the Notting Hill Carnival its unique character? The fact that it cannot be tightly controlled and organised is a fundamental strand in its history. The Notting Hill Carnival, you might say, is, by definition, beyond control. It is more than an event. It's a meeting point, a dynamic process in which various cultures and styles meet and produce something new.

But this is an argument whose credibility depends on how the experience affects visitors to the Notting Hill during the Carnival. If the Carnival is to reflect truly the elements of which it is composed, it requires an organisational framework which displays them to their best advantage.

Over the last few years the festival has begun to be dominated and, to some extent, swamped by a monster street party, centred round the mobile and the static sound systems, the DJs and the hordes of young people dancing to them. Through this party files a variety of costumed bands and revellers, whose presence provides the skeleton on which the whole thing hangs. In effect the organisation's lightness of touch has made certain that the street party aspect of the Carnival has largely overtaken and obscured – even swamped

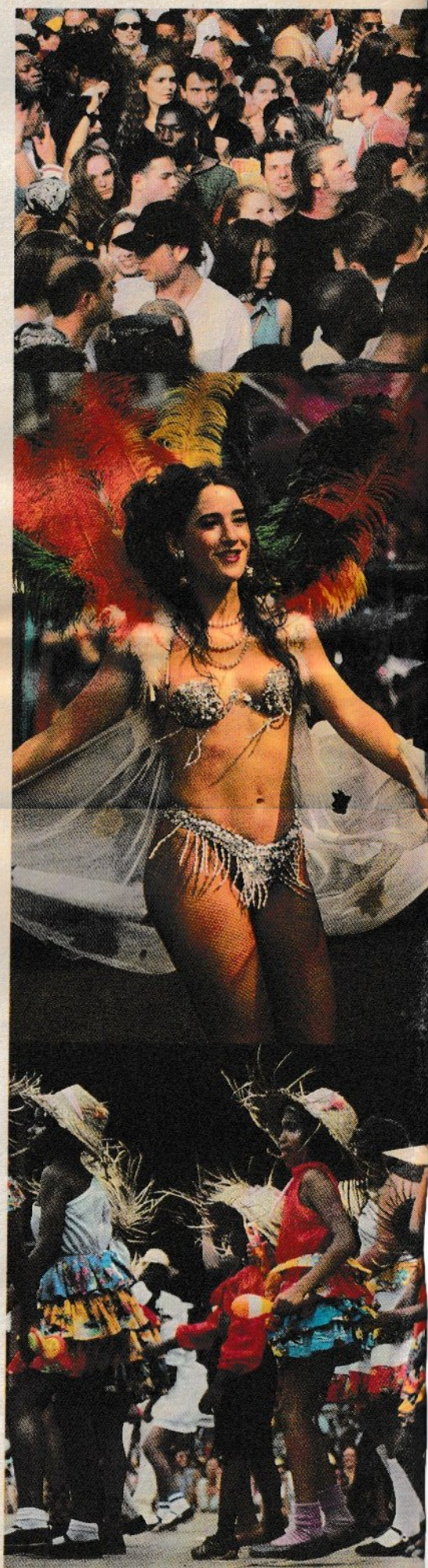
altering the character of the weekend meant expanding the processional elements, and amplifying its spectacular aspects.

As a result the organisation was restructured, and the present organisation comes out of that restructuring. But in the intervening years the balance has once again shifted to the point where the character of the festival is threatened.

The challenge of the future is to provide a structure which maintains the inclusive character of the Carnival, while highlighting the role of the traditional procession. This will offer a wider field of participation for groups from outside the Afro-Caribbean envelope, such as Greenpeace, which is now putting on one of the more spectacular costume bands.

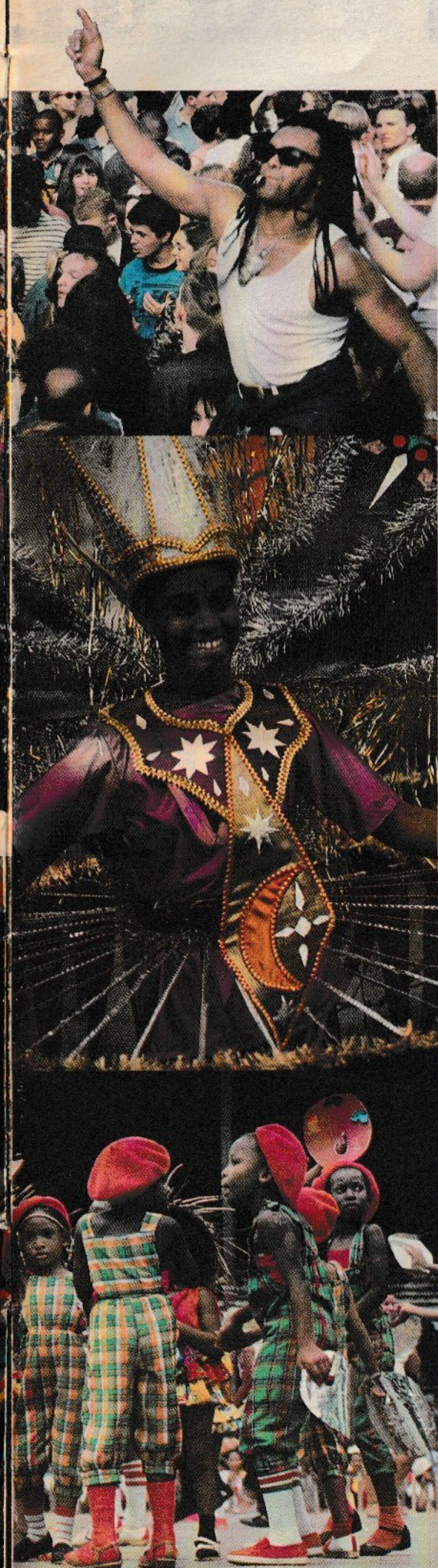
It's not too hard to imagine that a reformed structure which awards primacy to the formal procession will pull in a myriad of other organisations and groups in costume. This will not only increase the Carnival's attractiveness to players, spectators and sponsors, it will also maximise its potential as a spectacular showcase for the pageant of the new Britain.

Mike Phillips' latest novel, *Point Of Darkness*, is available from bookshops in Notting Hill.



while Darcus Howe urges the festival to remember its roots, its revolutions

val is it anyway?



TWO MILLION WILL GATHER at the Gate on the day to celebrate Notting Hill's 30th Carnival. It is a public festival, a freedom from the travail of the working day, subverting the harbingers of stress. All social definitions disappear in the clash and harmony of dub, soca and samba. The stiff upper lip disintegrates into a broad grin. A gorgeous cuisine rejects the culture of health food. Two fingers against authoritarianism and wild profiteering.

You enter freely, without price. Choose your spot, name your preference and more. The children of the SS Windrush will express in a riot of colour and performance their ease of presence in their land of adoption. The tensions of race, colour and class ease into a wholesome movement of fun.

Whose Carnival is it anyway? It is in the very nature of the festival that proprietorial rights are abjured. The festival belongs to us. The right to ownership is attendance on the day. And that is all.

Not quite! The origins of Carnival reveal

is liberated territory from 1959 or thereabouts. Five years later and we staked our claim. August Bank Holiday 1964. Five hundred revellers and a makeshift steelband in a swift turnaround along Great Western Road, Westbourne Park and thence on to Powis Square. Only a short run, a rehearsal so to speak. I was there. A few tentative steps, an embarrassed jig.

It is difficult to recall the mood. Historical events play tricks on the mind. At times, what emerges as an account is not what was, but what ought to have been. There was no defiance, no daring. Simply the primary steps of the new born, hesitant at first; watchful even. And the rains came.

André Shervington I remember. He served in the forces and defended his ground in the race riots. He bared his chest that day, spear in hand, performing the dance of the Watusi. All else was temperate. It was our D Day and Notting Hill, our Normandy.

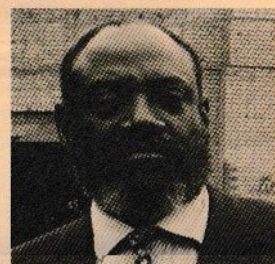
The form was distinctly Trinidadian.

Earls Court in a tentative alliance with the Gay movement. There Russell, Starling, Happy, Fellows, Blockers, Nickidee and the rest drummed and horned out a mix of Calypso jazz and from that hothouse the group moved to Notting Hill on that fateful day in August. The origins bear the stamp of simplicity and honest endeavour to this day.

I have never known anyone to advertise the Carnival. No jingles, no posters, no leaflets. And in a miraculous leap the numbers rose to 100,000 by 1974. The following year 250,000. They travelled to Notting Hill from every nook and cranny of the metropolis. And from other cities too.

And they entered through the arteries which trip off Kensington Park Road, that huge thoroughfare which cuts a swathe from Hyde Park Corner to Shepherds Bush. Through the souk that Edgware Road has become and via the Harrow Road, the street of shame where once upon a time Kelso Cochrane drew his final breath on a cold

“We staked our claim. It was our D Day, Notting Hill was our Normandy.”



the mystery of its locale, content and form.

Why Notting Hill? We ask. It is certainly not the arbitrary decision of an impresario. Here in this tiny space in the sprawling Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, there struck a vicious mood in those early movements of migrant settlement. Whites attacked West Indians at random. Skin colour was the only qualification required to be at the end of an axe handle, a baseball bat or cold steel. Kelso Cochrane, who left his Antigua home to seek the material benefits of the Mother Country, perished in a merciless encounter with the knife.

But it was not all victimisation. The nights were perilous. Blood flowed. Not just ours. We gathered in small groups to hunt the hunter. Our forerunners – men, women of World War II, all factory workers, bus conductors – returned steel for steel. They tell of police ambivalence, of teddy boys on the run. We were fighting for space, for the right to be.

Enter the judge who dished out relatively severe sentences to the perpetrators of racial war. And it was done. A victory for self defence from below and justice from on high. And the partisans formed that deep attachment to the place as partisans have done from time immemorial. Notting Hill

The French had raised the Tricolour on the island and brought with them their cultural forms. Carnival, the festival of the flesh, a licentious and Bacchanalian orgy of song, dance and sexual proclivity. Like all else, it melted in the tropical sun, a fluid movement in the mix and muddle between the slavemasters and the African proletariat.

The form survived under the British, right through the traumas of independence. The street parade, the costumes designed in the fantasies of the have-nots. And in a miraculous intervention the sons of slaves listened to the music of the masters, recreated the instruments of a classical orchestra and the steel band was born. Free black men and women gathered around the drum, fought the colonial police for the right to assemble in the festival of flesh, now appropriated from their masters. Like cricket, we had taken the form and re-fashioned it in the image of self.

By the summer of 1964 we were on our way, in enormous transference from the streets of Port of Spain to the highways and byways of Notting Hill. There was the intervening period of course. Recreation in dark basements where the blues dance was the form. An underground cultural movement. We raised our head in the Colherne Pub at

and windy night. And the vast thing brought new problems, deadly ones. The Law emerged, elegant in uniform, with a conception of order that was anathema to everything the Carnival stood for.

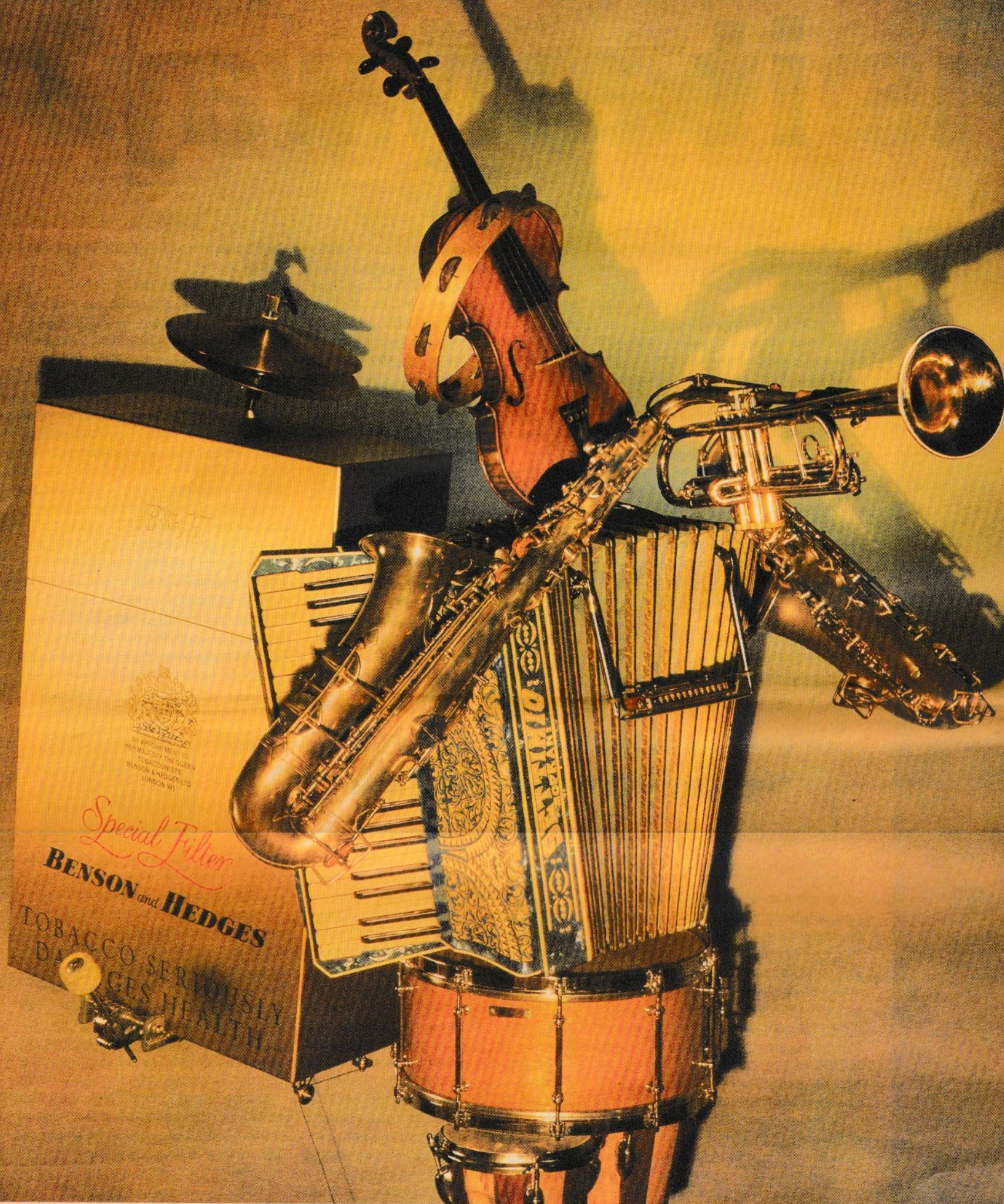
With 250,000 in support, we could not lose. The movement saw them off. A vast increase in police officers triggered off an insurrection. Finally, the sober heads from the Yard prevailed.

Whose Carnival is it anyway? In the days of trouble and joy we held the bridge tightly. A cautious incorporation of the Jamaican Sound System which at the time mobilised the young black soldiers of revolt. The festival survived the riots of the 80s, the fury of Broadwater Farm, the gun-slitting of the Yardies, the hollow threats of fascists.

Now, 30 years later, all are embraced. And when a Japanese tourist who perchance drifts along the Edgware Road on the Bank Holiday and hears the beat of a distant drum, bouncing on the laughter of a melody, he'll be welcomed too. A single skip of the feet, a swagger of the hip, a toss of the head and no one need know his name. He will be one of us.

Darcus Howe presents Devil's Advocate (Channel 4).

SOLE MUSIC? (3,3,4)



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Health Departments' Chief Medical Officers

Jump up and rave



If the steel pan is the sound of Notting Hill, Calypso music is its voice. Vivian Comma (left) takes the pulse of the form that helped kickstart Carnival in London.

THIS IS A STORY OF A MUSIC. A blizzard of notes and rhythm attacking and shaking you till you shout 'Too Much' but also 'Don't Stop'. It is also the story of lyrics. Captivating. Titillating. Inspiring. It is the story of Calypso.

Calypso would be nothing without the Trinidad Carnival, a bacchanalia where "a lot of tings does go on". No one in those climes would have expected this type of bacchanal to take place in so staid a country as England. This crazy uninhibited thing in London? Well, the new arrivals from the West Indies, after suffering years of nostalgia, suddenly came 'on the road' to dance, jump-up and gesticulate. Calypso was their tune. Calypso came to England around the mid-1940s, about ten years before West Indians began coming to England in large numbers. It came via America and the most popular song them was *Rum & Coca Cola*, the first Calypso to become a world hit, and

Trinidadians at home and abroad were very proud that their music should be universally accepted then. Another Calypso which raised their spirits and brought out the Carnival in them was one composed by Lord Kitchener called *Nora Nora*, in which he expressed his yearning to go back home to Trinidad, especially for the Carnival. It was broadcast on the Calling West Indies programme and became a Road March in Trinidad instantly. There were other Calypsonians in England at the same time making records to satisfy the needs of West Indians all over the country. Edmundo Ross, of Latin American music fame, was singing Calypsos on the radio, and two of his renditions, *Brown Skin Gal* and *All Day All Night Miss Mary Anne*, became hits. The spirit of Carnival was now taking shape in the form of house parties all over London.

Things really began to move when the West Indies won the cricket at Lord's around the end of the 40s and a Calypsonian by the name of Lord Beginner eulogised that victory in a song called *Cricket, Lovely Cricket*. For a long time to come, bright and breezy cricket was called Calypso Cricket. It was always nice to see the word Calypso splashed across some part of a newspaper to describe a game of cricket which was full of action and excitement. It reached a stage where Calypso and the West Indian were one and the same thing. Volatility plus.

To seal the impression further, a steel band, composed of the best players from bands all over Trinidad, was organized and sent here to England to play a series

of concerts at the Festival of Britain in 1951. It was a roaring and riotous success. England had never heard or seen anything like it. They were absolutely flabbergasted by the idea that music could come from those drums that they saw in the petrol station. No, impossible. It had to be voodoo or magic of some sort? Their scepticism was only allayed when they had the opportunity to hit a pan with the rubbered sticks, and shaking their heads they agreed that it really was an instrument. West Indians here were now sure that they had something really beautiful to offer the world, and they did just that.

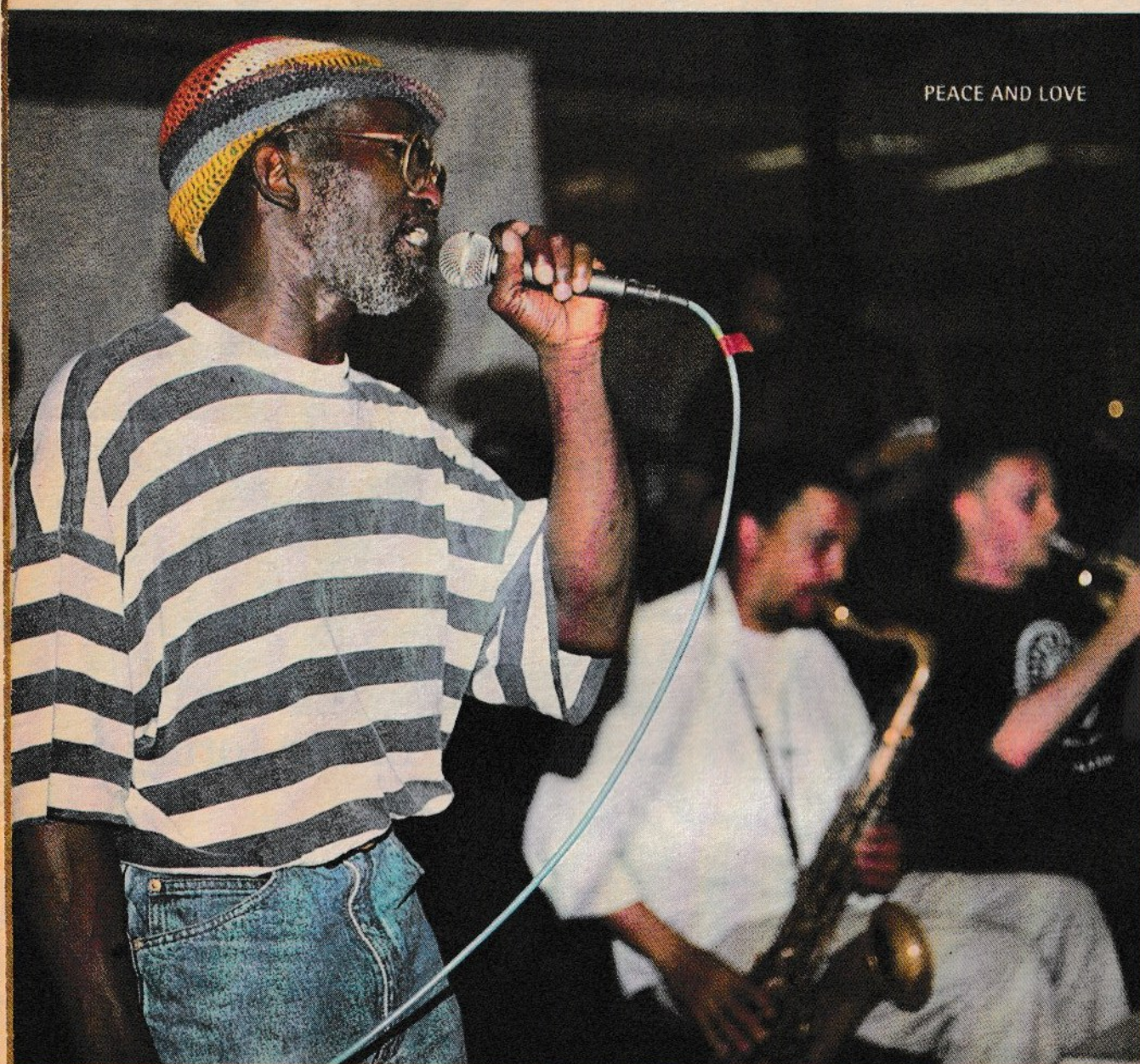
Russ Henderson, Trinidad's best jazz pianist and player of Caribbean music was then residing in England. He knew how to play a lead pan, and when the Trinidad Orchestra was about to go back to Trinidad he encouraged one of the players by the name of Stirling Bettancourt to remain in England, the idea being to form a small band. After teaching another musician to play what is known as a Duddup, a two-note instrument, they were ready to play out professionally. The engagements came from all quarters, and they appeared in all the well known clubs of the day, and particularly the coming-out balls for débutantes. Some years later the band became bigger and played for the Lord Mayor's show. The Steelband was now here to stay.

Quite a number of things Caribbean were unfolding themselves in various quarters. The biggest single eye-catcher was happening at Paddington Railway Station, where many West Indians arrived. The first thing which was noticeable about them was their dress: the bright colours. The women wore bright hats, the men white trousers and two-tone shoes and brightly coloured ties. They cut diametrically across the whole style of English dress. What the English would wear in summer, the West Indians wore all through the year.

The workers on the station were simply baffled. Before a boat train came in, the station would be packed with West Indians, who had come some time before and now went to meet the new arrivals. The greetings were loud and cheerful. All the latest news had to be told right there, and of course one of the main bits of information was the health of the Carnival and the latest Calypsos; and they brought the latest Calypso records with them.

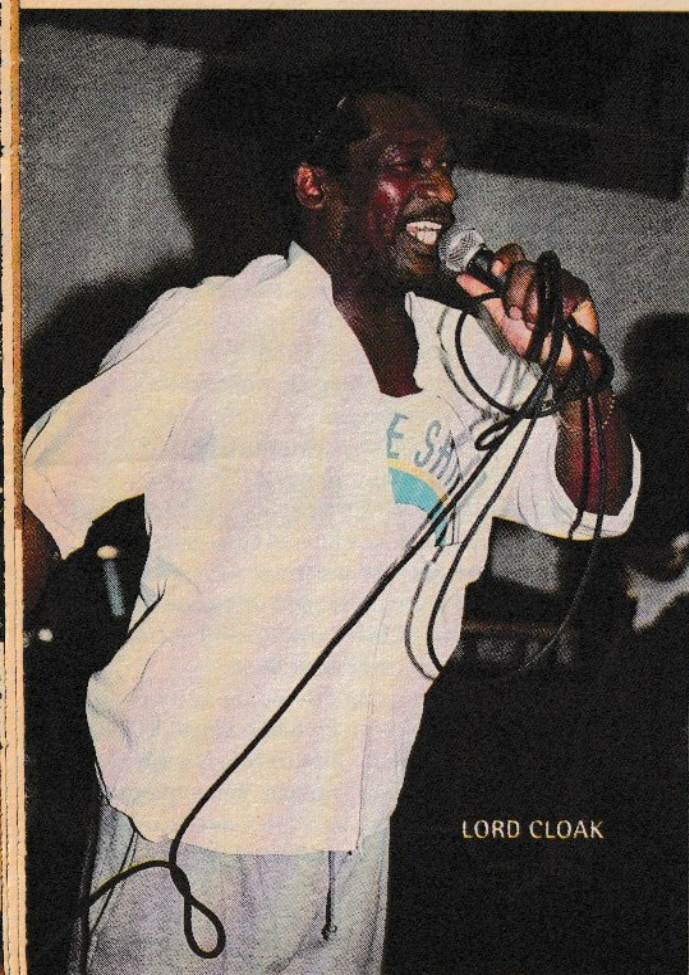
It could easily be said that the spirit of Carnival, that driving force, took root in the railway station of Paddington and, come the year 1956, the artistic effects of the West Indians were coming to the boil. Warwick Films of Mayfair decided to make a film called *Fire Down Below* shot mostly in Trinidad. Yours truly was chosen to compose some music for the film, and the Katzenjammers steelband, who were the winners of the 1956 Steelband festival, were





PEACE AND LOVE

“Lampooning, ridiculing and even waltzing to the Calypso rhythm. Real spontaneous theatre.”



LORD CLOAK

elected to come up to England, together with dancers Popsy Charles, Stretch Cox, Pat Maurice and three other dancers. The Calypso *Madeleine Oy*, which was the Road March for 1953, was used extensively as background music and on the set was the largest number of West Indians in mas costume ever to come together at that time. The spirit of Carnival went all through the making of the film.

At the same time the BBC brought together the best West Indian musicians and organised a programme called *Caribbean Cavalcade*. They played the jazz of the day and Calypsos were sung by George Brown and Ricardo, well known West Indian singers of that time. Russ Henderson supplied the steelband flavour. The leader was a famous trumpeter from Jamaica named Jairo Washington and the arranger was Rupert Nurse of Trinidad. The radio programme ran for 13 weeks and gave Calypso a great push up the popular music ladder.

In 1957 20th Century Fox made a film called *Island in the Sun* with James Mason, Harry Belafonte, Joan Collins, and Cary Grant. There were beautiful scenes of limbo dancing. Most of the film was shot in Grenada and the Carnival scenes were terrific. Harry Belafonte's rendition of *Island in the Sun* on disc was a hit. Another shot in the arm for Calypso.

It was from then that the Mighty Sparrow, who became Calypso King for 1956, began composing some of the most beautiful Calypsos ever. His music literally seduced the

dancers into jumping-up in the Carnival fashion at parties and dances. And so it was that many ideas for playing mas at dances came about. Small groups of friends would disguise themselves in simple costumes and when they got on the dance floor they would keep themselves together like a band of masquerade. At dances the band-of-mas idea was expressed far and wide. For the next few years jumping-up was all the rage. The urge and desire to express oneself, in a real Carnival road-marching sense, was now felt by both musicians and dancers all about.

Jumping-up on a dance floor is not the same as dancing in the street, which is free and unrestricted feeling. And so it was, that in the year of 1965, some days before the August Bank Holiday, the talk went around the town. They Coming On De Road. Of course the grapevine referred to the musicians who pioneered the Calypso music and steelband playing in London: none other than Russ Henderson and his musicians. At the same time a group of community workers, including pan player *par excellence*, Selwyn Baptiste, had the same idea and came on the road with their music. They would be lampooning, ridiculing and even waltzing to the Calypso rhythm, which always caught the Europeans jumping on the wrong foot, but they still jumped. Here was real spontaneous theatre.

In terms of pure entertainment and enjoyment, this was a milestone in the life of the West Indians. The music of Carnival Caribbean-style was now being played on the road at Notting Hill, in London. In the ensuing years, more steelbands arrived in London and more orchestras were formed and were playing at the jump-up session every year. The young Ebony steelband who had not long before found their musical legs could not wait any longer and immediately struck up the latest Calypso of that time. The combination was a knockout. There were all sorts of exclamations of appreciation. “All You Come Good.” “Gawd All You Surprise We.” “You Going To Kill Dem Today”. The time was more than ready for the pageantry.

Vivian Comma, alternatively known as The Golden Cockerel, has been a Calypsonian at Notting Hill Carnival since its inception. This article is adapted from *Masquerading* (Arts Council).



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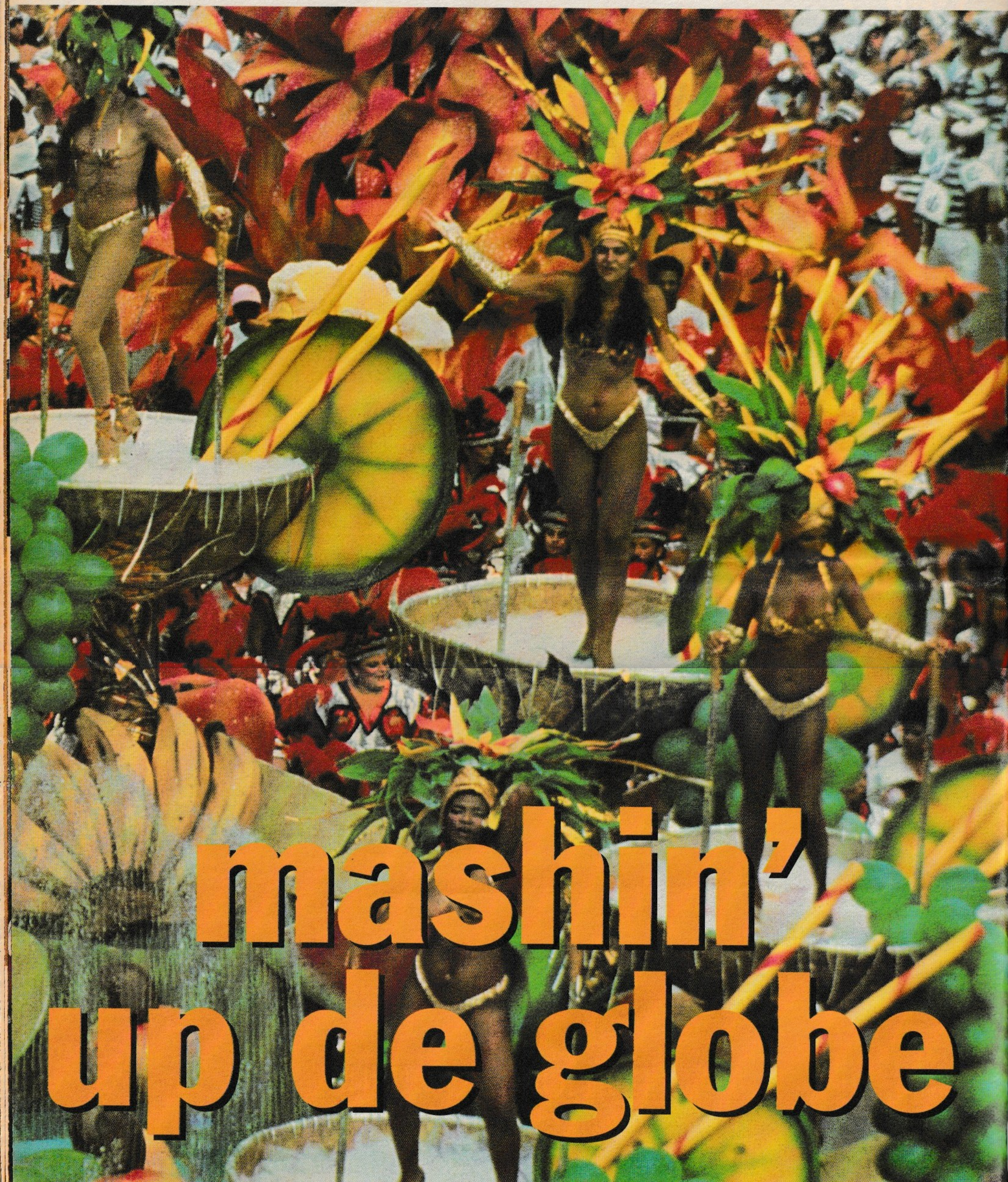
Protection for a new generation

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It started with a date. Now everyone's getting up



**mashin'
up de globe**

Carnival. We report from four hungover cities.

The world's biggest party

CANDACE PIETTE IN RIO

THE WHISTLE BLEW. Fireworks exploded and the drums thundered into action. The air quivered with tension and excitement. Suddenly, they were off. Four thousand, five hundred people, members of the *Salgueiro* samba school moving into the glare of the arclights. They were competing in Rio's yearly carnival parade on the concrete track of Rio's purpose-built sambadrome. Pushed into line by men with sticks, the parade started out. They had little more than an hour to display the results of a year's hard work. Sweat pouring down under the elaborate head-dresses and from under the heavy costumes, the dancers gave everything they had to the cheering crowds. They had become part of an enormous, magical opera, a feast of feathers and glitter.

The parade, which stretches from sunset to dawn on two nights is the centre piece of the *Rio Carnival*, the biggest and most exciting party in the world. It brings Brazil to a stop for a whole week drawing the country into a world of sheer exhilaration. "*Carnaval* shows that Brazil is capable of everything," says the anthropologist Everardo Rocha of the University of Rio, "we have never adopted the bourgeois values of the industrial revolution but we invest enormously in our parties."

The *Rio Carnival* began in the last century among the African slaves on the sugar plantations in the North East of Brazil. With the abolition of slavery in 1888, and because of a searing drought, many former slaves came to Rio. In the 1920s the samba schools were formed, so-called because they used to rehearse in school grounds. Today there are more than sixty schools, mostly in poorer areas of the city after which they are named. They are the heart of the communities, people support them in the same way they support their favourite football team. The sixteen top schools – or Premier League – compete annually in the main parade.

Carnaval used to be a ramshackle affair with the schools having to raise their own money for costumes and floats. But in the sixties the *bicheros* began to take over. The *jogo do bicho* is an immensely popular illegal lottery game and the *bicheros*, or organisers of the game, move millions of dollars each week, running the Rio criminal underworld with the profits. They started contributing to the samba schools to gain support from the poor communities in which they were based.

The huge investment has led to the parade becoming increasingly professionalised and the *bicheros* have taken over from Rio's city hall as the main *Carnaval* organisers. They have become responsible for ticket sales, television rights, and for cutting the records of winning samba songs. Schools now hire directors on fat retainers who work with teams of hundreds of professional carpenters, sculptors, musicians and tailors. When, last year, a Rio judge put 14 of the *bicheros* in jail on various charges including murder, people feared the parade would suffer. Not so.

But the parade is not the only carnival in Rio. For years, the splendour of the sambadrome has had to compete for its public with the balls organised by the Rio night-clubs, increasingly the territory of the rich, those who can pay the exorbitant entrance prices. People in Rio have become more and more sickened by the excessive displays of nudity and by the drug-laden culture of the clubs and they've been turning to a relatively new phenomenon – the *blocos*. Organised by groups of people who perhaps meet in a bar regularly or play football together, the *blocos* chose a day during *Carnaval* and go dancing through the streets. A drum section follows behind trucks carrying amplified sound equipment. It's a spontaneous affair, a return to street carnival – that joyful, spontaneous, chaotic event that everyone used to participate in.



STEVE LASKY

Democracy run amok, the greatest free show on earth

CONSTANCE SNOW IN NEW ORLEANS

MARDI GRAS. French for Fat Tuesday, last chance to binge before the bell tolls on Ash Wednesday, ringing in 45 sombre days of Lent. It's the noisy climax of New Orleans' rowdiest season, the final day of a month-long frenzy of parades, balls and bacchanals known as Carnival, from the Latin *Carnivale*, or 'farewell to flesh'.

Beginning on Epiphany, January 6, downtown buildings are festooned with traditional colours and, during the final two weeks, more than 60 parades stop traffic throughout the city. Day and night, streets are alive with marching bands, motorcycle drill teams, show horses, dance groups, stilt walkers and other exotica as spectators scramble for 'throws', plastic trinkets tossed from the floats by masked riders.

In all, there are nearly 100 krewes, as well as hundreds of informal groups chugging along on outrageous rigs. A handful of the oldest krewes, secret societies that date back to the 19th century, still present the season's debutantes at exclusive *Bal masques* (and are notoriously stingy with throws when they parade).

Meanwhile, nouveau krewes make up for lack of pedigree with open membership and plenty of flesh. The largest, Endymion and Bacchus, both march the weekend before Mardi Gras with a combined total of 60 bands, 75 floats and over 2,000 riders who toss out 2.5 million doubloons and 200,000 gross of beads.

The old and the new don't always see eye-to-eye. When, in 1988, the New Orleans City Council proposed an anti-discrimination ordinance for Carnival krewes, a few of the old-line elitist organisations dropped out of the parade lineup, rather than comply. But social squabbles are nothing new, says Carnival historian Priscilla Vayda. "When the first black organisation paraded in 1909, King Zulu mocked the pretensions of white Carnival 'royalty' by carrying a banana stalk sceptre and a lard-can crown."

The Krewe of Zulu has maintained its satirical bent, but Rex and his queen are the undisputed monarchs. Zulu and Rex roll early Mardi Gras morning, as more than a million people take to the streets for a day-long ramble through a dizzy kingdom blessed with an excess of everything but parking spaces and common sense. Most rules are suspended, overindulgence is *de rigeur*.

Famous old marching groups like the Half-Fast Walking Club wind from bar to bar, dispensing paper

carnations to ladies who pay with a kiss. The Wild Tchoupitoulas and other historic tribes of 'Mardi Gras Indians' rattle the windows with dark rhythms, clad in spectacular costumes spangled with sequins and plumes.

Masqueraders range from the sublime to the scandalous – dominatrix 'nuns,' Elvis zombies, topless girl scouts, roller skating transvestites – a moveable orgy of bare flesh and blasphemy. Fundamentalist preachers, armed with loudspeakers and neon crosses, hit town by the busload to rage against the wholesale sin.

Here is democracy run amok, billed as the greatest free show on earth. But Carnival is actually one of the leading sources of income for New Orleans, attracting some 300,000 tourists every season. More than 17,000 active krewe members spend an average of \$400 each for throws alone, while overall spending approaches \$500 million annually.

Official reports still measure the success of each Mardi Gras in tons – of garbage. At the stroke of midnight, cleaning crews sweep the mob out of the French Quarter in a rite known as 'the reclaiming of Bourbon Street'. By sunrise on Wednesday repentance is sincere, a heartfelt, final farewell to flesh. Until next year.



LETTING IT ALL HANG OUT: Big time Rio (left); New Orleans' Moon Walk transvestites (top, right) and a member from Tuck's Parade (right)

Trinidad and Tobago, the mother of all carnivals

DAVID CUFFY IN PORT OF SPAIN

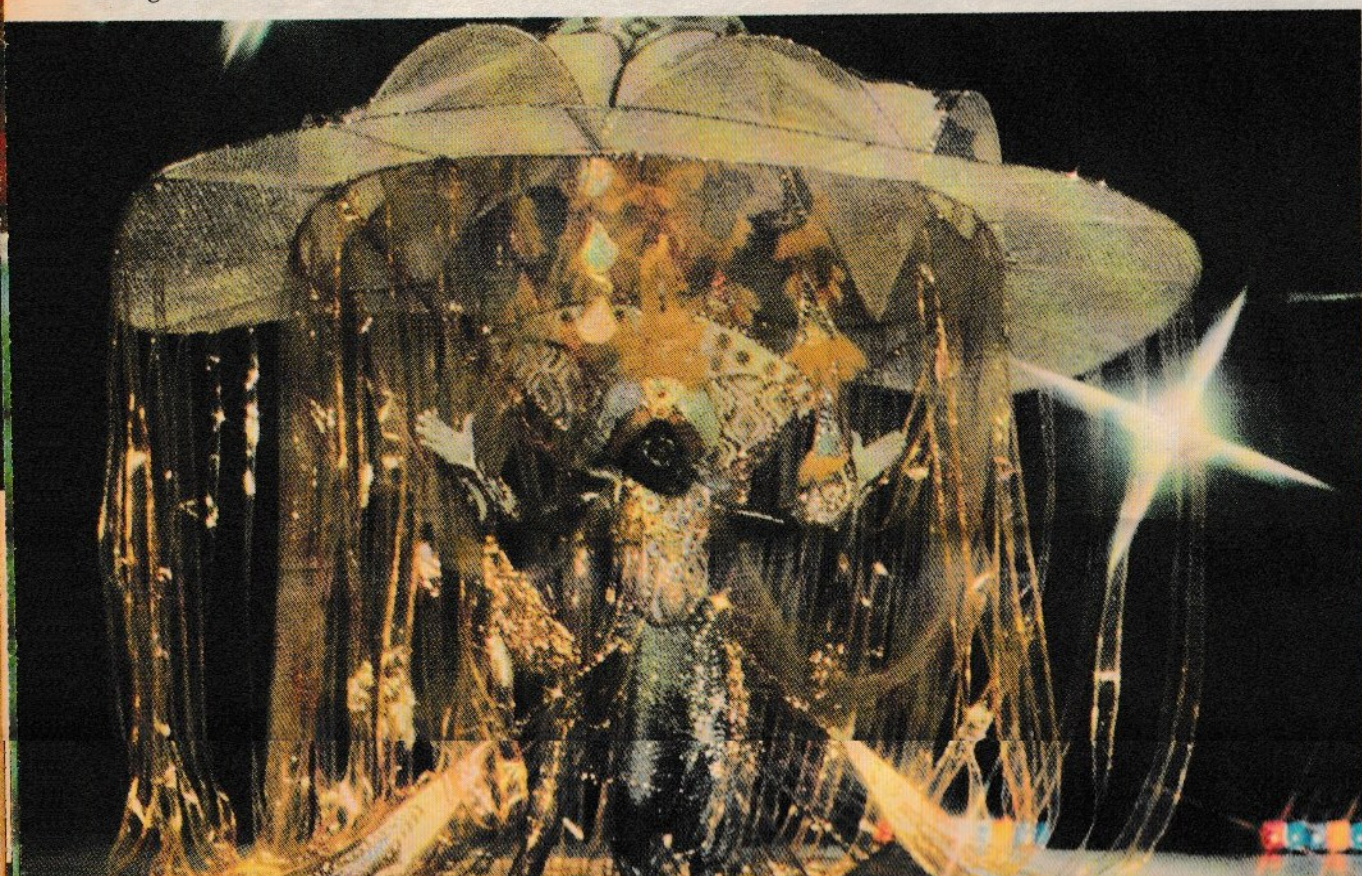
"CARNIVAL IS NOT A DESTINATION, it's a journey." The closing words at this year's Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, delivered at the prize distribution ceremony by National Carnival Committee chairman, Alfred Asuiton.

It is a journey. A journey that has taken its players – calypsonians, steelbands, craftsmen, designers and musicians – all over the world, planting and nurturing Trinidad-style carnivals in other countries, particularly among the many Caribbean immigrants of the diaspora. The direction of the old colonial 'plantation' process has been reversed, from the New World back to the old, except that the commodities now are organic art-forms and individuals rather than cash crops. Trinidad Carnival is a deeply resonant anniversary of deliverance from the bondage of colonial slavery; a journey of freedom as well as a mechanism of social release. Its origins escape rigid definitions of 'history' and 'culture'. They encompass European pagan fertility rites, Christian festivals, African slavery and the post-Emancipation spirit of anger and reclamation.

Carnival by dismembering its body.

Fortunately for the people of Trinidad and Tobago, the strictures imposed over the years only paved the way for the development of many aspects of Carnival that has made it the greatest festival on earth and the mecca of street carnivals in the world. The innovations of calypso and steelbands sprang directly from restrictions imposed from above and just as the evolution of the festival has monitored the changing social and economic patterns in the islands, the shimmering costumes of today are a measure of increased prosperity.

In 1957 the Carnival Development Committee (CDC), a division of central government, became responsible for organising what had now become a two-day festival. Two venues were utilised for competitions: Queens Park Savannah, and Independence Square. Bands were getting larger, from an average of 200 to 300 revellers to some bands now in excess of 3,000. The number of bands also increased: during Carnival Tuesday there is now non-stop



GOLD, BOLD AND INSPIRATIONAL: The winners stage at the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival and another Wonder of the World

A European-style Carnival was first brought to Trinidad by the French Roman Catholics who came to the island following the Cedula of Population in 1783. These Frenchmen celebrated the 'farewell to flesh' with traditional dinners, balls and fêtes. But these festivities were also a time of illusion for insecure masters. Planters and their wives would dress up as slaves and blacken their faces.

This element of fantasy was parodied in turn by black Trinidadians who soon got in on the act after Emancipation in 1838. They celebrated the Canne Brulée (cane burning) festival by drinking rum, fêting in the streets, and playing stick fights. This festival marked the harvesting of canes as an outward show of African cultural heritage, but in ways that mimicked the whites, introducing the parodic strain of the festival. What had been social and sexual inversion in European festivals was given an extra dimension in the artificially constructed, intricate racial structure of the Caribbean.

Carnival in Trinidad is now held just before Lent and ends at midnight on Shrove Tuesday, but in the 19th century it was celebrated on August 1, Emancipation Day. During the period between the late 1800s and 1957, the law sought to contain and control the Carnival celebrations as they became a flashpoint for racial tensions. Drums were banned as 'barbaric' in 1883. They tried to kill the

parading from nine in the morning until eight at night.

The build-up takes weeks with constant gatherings and parties building up momentum. Visitors are advised to shed their inhibitions. There is little chance of learning to move in the Trinidadian way unless you are an accomplished mimic. Trinidadians and Tobagonians 'Jump up' for Carnival. It's a loose definition but at its wildest it's exactly that – both feet off the ground, arms high above the head, as the calypso music transports you to another realm. 'Donkey Dancing' is the most recent Carnival craze, rooted in old African traditions. Women ride around on the backs of men or it can be performed solo: backside out, hands gripping the reins.

Awestruck tourists call Trinidad and Tobago Carnival a Wonder of the World. Wonderful it may be but it is the concentrated effort of the community that puts the show on the road. A tough-talking Carnival chairman has thrown out a warning to the business community – "Put your money where your respect is" – to make it viable.

Next month the islands host the first ever Carnival King and Queen of the World competition, bringing together carnival cultures from over 50 countries. It is fitting: Carnival has become Trinidad's most valuable export and its relationship with 'trading posts' like Notting Hill is one of mutual enrichment and exchange.

Notting Hill's little sister

LOUIS DU MOULIN IN ROTTERDAM

THE ROTTERDAM CARNIVAL came of age last month. Ten years old and thriving, Notting Hill's stripling sibling took to the road holding her head high. Warming up began early in July, but by the evening of Friday 29th, steam was rising from the gathering crowds of participants and spectators until the dividing line between them became hazy. For the next 24 hours the inner-city was cruised by marching bands as the heart of Rotterdam pumped and breathed Carnival.

At the end of the 19th century Carnival was introduced in the Dutch West Indies by the European élite. In the sixties the Antillians brought their own, tropicalised version back to the Netherlands. Despite the enthusiasm for this spontaneous initiative of some Rotterdam students, it was initially fraught with trouble. The history of Rotterdam carnival is not without attendant growing pains stemming from a legacy of racial interchange and imperial exploitation.

It took until 1981 before a couple of the same student group were able to organise a carnival in Utrecht inspired by Notting Hill. Two years later everything seemed settled, but then internal disagreement caused a split, which set all eyes on Rotterdam again. But since the Carnival was jump-started in 1984 the city, world famous for its gigantic harbour, has become the place to be when July swings around.

The tenth anniversary celebration of the *Zomercarnaval* was the most spectacular event to date. "An incomparable spectacle with an underlying noble philosophy", according to the proud city mayor Bram Peper. "As with Notting Hill, this event was first of all the domain of those citizens with Caribbean ancestry. Their goal was to give fellow Rotterdam citizens a unique taste of Caribbean roots. Over the decade the festival has grown from an exhibition of a specifically immigrant culture into a broad celebration for all the Netherlands. The name *Antillian Zomercarnaval* has evolved into the more embracing *Zomercarnaval Rotterdam*."

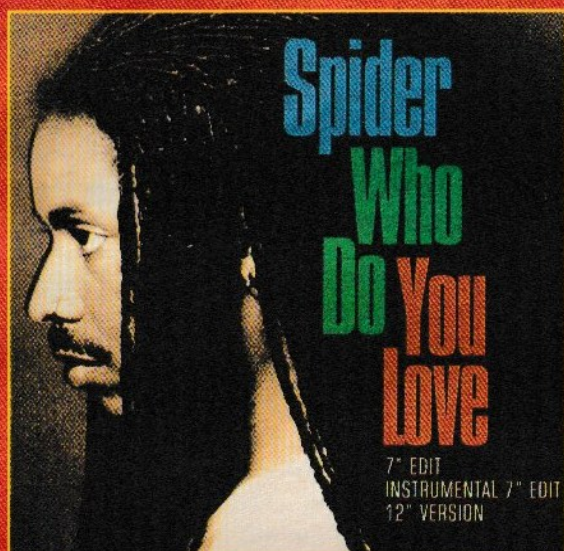
The smooth promotalk from the townhall, one of the hot spots during the festivities, is heartily confirmed by Curacao-born Carnival activist Karel Willems. "This event stands for a tremendous melting pot. People come from all over to participate. That's why we can boast an attendance of more than 600,000 the last few years. Alongside the Rotterdam Marathon, the Carnival is the nation's greatest event. The Notting Hill Carnival was, of course, a source of inspiration and is a dearly beloved sister now."

But Notting Hill is more a kind of Wild Bunch concept, more spontaneous in character. In London you see more costume bands and venues with sound systems and DJs all along the route, whereas here most of the music is produced by the parade itself. There are three or four sound systems on trailers, but the rest of the music comes from steel, brass and other bands. Rumba and Calypso play an important role, but Rotterdam covers the whole spectrum.

Although the fame of the *Zomercarnaval* may be growing steadily, the festival itself is limited in its ambitions to expand. A street parade consisting of 2,000 to 2,500 people stretching more than a mile is just about enough to handle logistically. Should the crazy serpent become any bigger, then the route would need to change and that's not easy.

Money is provided mostly by the municipality of Rotterdam and the *Zomercarnaval* has become the city's largest outdoor event in part because people can still enjoy it gratis. Free labour and a great deal of sponsorship from the local business community, both financially and through materials, form the backbone of the mega-event. "Without that," says Willems, "it would be far too costly. But happiness is the real fuel for this very flexible human machine."

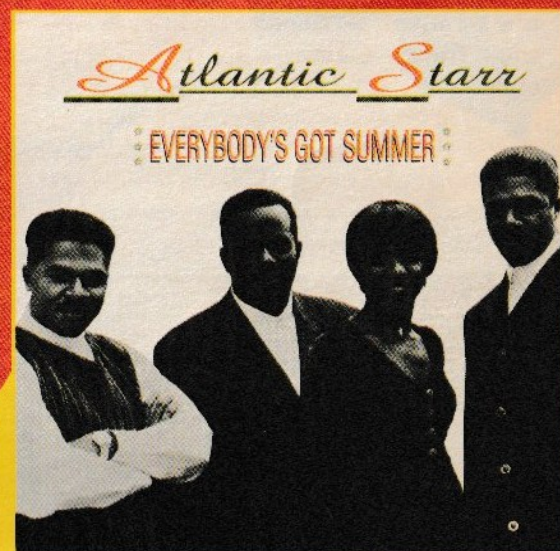
EVERYBODY'S GOT summer



SPIDER

This 26 year old South London born jazz rapper brings a breath of fresh air to dancefloors everywhere, with this casually delivered rap, without doubt the coolest vibe to be on this summer.

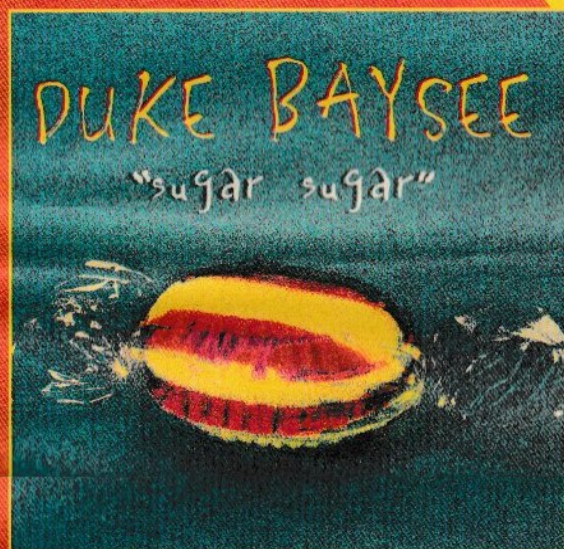
Single "WHO DO YOU LOVE" out now



ATLANTIC STARR

From the group who brought you "Secret Lovers" and the haunting ballad "Always", comes this summer's hottest clubland sound. Taken from their forthcoming Arista album "Time".

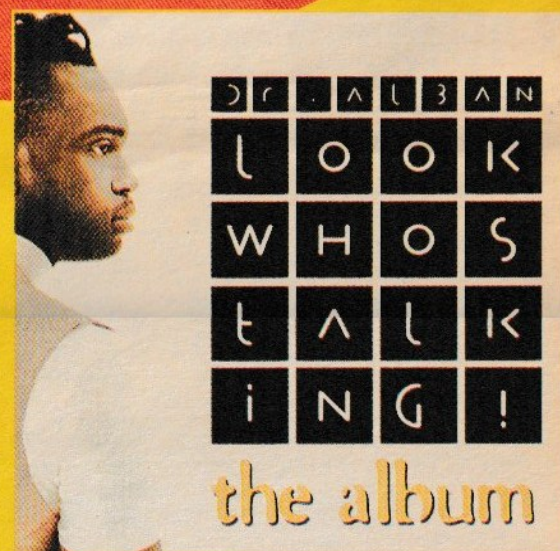
Single "EVERYBODY'S GOT SUMMER" out now



DUKE BAYSEE

There's no stopping this one, just watch it fly. Better still, go and get a copy, then go and get another (one for each ear) and join the party.

Single "SUGAR SUGAR" out 22/8/94



DR. ALBAN

From the man who sang "It's My Life", "Hello Africa" and "Sing Hallelujah" comes a new album "Look Who's Talking". The album features the hit singles "Look Who's Talking" and "Away From Home".

Album "LOOK WHO'S TALKING" out 22/8/94



E-Z-K

It wouldn't quite be summer without an infectious soca groove to help the carnival spirit go down just a little easier. This will get inside your head and take you over. Unforgettable.

Single "RAGGA RAGGA RAGGA" out now



JOCELYN BROWN & KYM MAZELLE

Jocelyn and Kym join forces again for a unique recording of ZZ Top's "Gimme All Your Loving". In addition to this, the new single contains a brand new version of Jocelyn's "Somebody Else's Guy" and a new 1994 remix of Kym's "Love Me The Right Way".

Single "GIMME ALL YOUR LOVING" out 12/9/94

fle



Modern African art or
hi-tech showing-off?
Leslée Wills (left) on the
costume trends displayed
at Notting Hill.



sh, flash and fantasy

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL MAY HAVE MATURED and metamorphosed over its three decades, but one thing endures. Its costume bands remain the centrepiece, like the fashions on a Parisien catwalk, whose gurus maintain a sometimes fierce, but always flamboyant, visual debate.

Here in the mid-1990s, the current artistic frisson comes from the awesome dimensions of fantasy floats, crafted in aluminium, fibreglass rod, or wire and cane extensions. Spectacular costumes like these have grown upwards and outwards and evolved through a variety of styles as a metaphor for the migration of Caribbean peoples abroad.

For the last two years Masquerade 2000 – designed by Lincoln Rahamut – and Hackney-based Perpetual Beauty have won all the prizes in this superstructure category. Their superbly ornate creations are modern day totems to three-dimensional form. They are also great feats of engineering – either pulled along by wheels and coasters or ingeniously balanced on decorated back-pack contraptions.

But size, as they say, isn't everything. The superstructures vie with other productions that combine themes dealing more candidly with issues of social and cultural identity. This year's Carnival masquerade bands will be dressed up as an assortment of characters from mythology: creatures from the sea, Roman gladiators, fancy Indians. Of the bands actually registered, it seems that there will be as many as five sets of warrior bands. With them are traditional favourites such as the Zulu themes of bands like Emashi and Hackney United.

All the designs – the work of long hours – come packaged with certain in-built styles and philosophies and, such is size and influence of Notting Hill, Carnival designers have begun to generate some of the newer trends appearing in older Caribbean carnivals.

Take Lion Youth's White, Fowl Drum and Candle of 1981 – a tribute to worshippers of Shango, the Yoruba god, which came complete with drums and ritual performance – and, later, their Mamywata in 1984. Both pre-dated but nevertheless shaped Trinidadian designer Peter Minshall's River and Callaloo all-white costume phase. Minshall's designs are legendary in Trinidad and he was the inspiration behind the spectacular designs at the opening of the Barcelona Olympics.

Notting Hill is rarely overmodest when it comes to matters of influence and Carnival's Chair, Claire Holder, remembers that Minshall's early Sky Tribe, produced in London for the Metronomes costume section in 1977, was transported lock stock and barrel to Trinidad. Coincidences or trans-influences?

But in spite of developing a healthy audience of its own, Notting Hill Carnival has largely – although loosely – stuck to those themes and ideas that echo Trinidad, Bahia, the Eastern Caribbean and Guyana's own home-flavoured traditions.

Indeed, it is tempting to argue that Notting Hill is exclusively a twentieth century African art form; but this would be to miss the influence of Muslim Hosay festivals, Hindu spring Phagwah rituals, and Jamaican, Jonkonnu and Chinese celebrations, among others. Notting Hill has become a true cultural patchwork.

But a key point is that, in the Caribbean, the cultural input of the East Indian and Chinese indentured community was spared the relentless bannings that the African barrackyard inhabitants experienced. At Notting Hill, reflecting the Trinidad experience, new sophisticated forms have evolved to hide the quintessential African nature of the event. These forms, however, simply mirror artistic developments worldwide and of African artists in the diaspora.

London is unique for its politically correct themes, exemplified this year in Alexander and Seventh Feathers' Equal Rights and the South London Three Generations of Women band. But there are roots to this too: since slavery Carnival has teased its audience with its role reversals which, let's face it, are but a cry for equal opportunities.

Notting Hill, remember, started off as a parade through its streets with onlookers waving as those dressed up paraded by. The provocative element, at that time, was restrained since its participants were first generation West Indians self-consciously reflecting the reserve of their new home.



BODY TALK: Steering a risqué path between policeman and photographer (main picture, left); glittering in gold (bottom, left); a Masquerade 2000 half-mask (above), part bal masque, part 20th century seduction



CHRIS WILDBLOOD

KINGS AND WINGS: the Zulu theme explores cultural roots (above) while the lighter backpack (below) is increasingly fashionable

But the event has endured as a protest forum for its dissatisfied Caribbean community and now, Notting Hill has also become a genuine reflection of the cultural kaleidoscope flourishing in Britain. The rise of Zouk Beat music has spawned this year's Baf La Lagé by Club Zouk and we have BeeRaaHar's The Gold of Guyana, produced in Stoke Newington but quite obviously encouraged by Guyana's homegrown Mashramani.

for many masqueraders, it's also about celebrating their bodies. It is as if sexual expressiveness has replaced ritual African spirit trances. Body movements or 'wining' insist on lighter, more mobile, easily transportable backpack extensions.

In many respects Carnival wining replaces ancient puberty rites and fertility dances. Once upon a time it used to be Women Youth who stole the show, now it's bands like the

subliminal quests for reinforcement of a myriad of cult identities, their range and variety illuminating the sub-groups and shifting identification processes among us. Some have roots that have been long obscured: the predominance of Things with Wings apparently owes its roots to the Bush Negro Saramaca tribe's hurling themselves off cliffs in vain attempts to fly back to Africa from their slavery in Surinam.

Transvestism – which has increasing roles and interpretations at the Rio Carnival, for instance – and body worship are also about shifting identities. If anything, Carnival-goers seized upon the celebration of the body much earlier than its players. Probably because of band-players' weariness of erratic weather or designers' lack of interest, nearly nude bodies hit the streets only in the late 1980s.

Carnival lore has it that a Brazilian samba school featured a naked, writhing woman in a cage at the top of their float and started the trend. For the actual band sections this has meant an upsurge in skimpy leotards, with the swimsuit and catsuit taking over from machine-made jumpsuits as a base to build on.

So like Trinidad and Rio de Janeiro, London glorifies the body now. Just as Carnival is about celebrating culture,

"It's as if sexual expressiveness has replaced ritual spirit trances"

On the other side of this kaleidoscope is the separate and competing attraction of the Jamaican-style sound systems. At one stage in Notting Hill's history, these were nearly always static and attracted their own crowds, people for whom the costumes were little more than a sideshow. Now there is a new generation of soca sound systems, mobile and a visible alternative to steelbands, the traditional music of Carnival. These have grown up out of the dub culture in Carnival and often larger bands like Masquerade 2000 have their own sounds as well as accompanying steelbands. This imprint of the Jamaican reggae scene, though at first resented by purists and pan-lovers, has helped the acceptance of the sound system into the moving part of the festival. The rise of the sound system, too, in Toronto, Brooklyn and other celebrations outside the Caribbean region is evidence of the cross-fertilisation of various island forms.

Reggae, now Ragga and Jungle, are unarguably Jamaica's most powerful exports. They brought the rastafarian religion with them in the 70s and Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa cry in tow. This inspired the formation of Lion Youth's Lion of Judah theme as far back as 1977 and Yaa Asantewaa's prize-winning 1989 costumes. Now, in 1994, Carl Gabriel is featuring Rasta red, gold and green water carriers in his procession and paying homage to the Ethiopian flag and reggae-centred beliefs. Like Debbie Enoe's Kuumba, he is harnessing the community's hugely emotional response to issues of origin and cultural identity and its popularity among young black British people.

Western Park Garage mas camp also have plans to call up island connections with their Los Barbados theme this year, still more witness to island or tribal affiliations speaking through the idiom of Carnival. All these bands reflect are the island and territorial loyalties that emerge alongside thematic ideas. Carnival storylines are connecting up with

Burroqueets and Misty who dominate the street dancing. You can still detect an identification with colonial grace and patronage in some of the elaborate floats, just as you can feel the rebellious Farewell to Sins of the Flesh in the evocative dancing. In the Caribbean, the ex-slaves' invasion of the pre-Lenten feastday and radicalisation of its character was intrinsically connected with rhythm and movement.

Street dancing or wining subconsciously links up with the congados and maracatos, carnival dances of Brazil which hark back to the cortege of the King of Congo.

Mas is also about masks. Young women in particular recognise Carnival for the photo opportunity that it is. Many used to prefer made-up or painted faces, as opposed to wearing constructed masks.

But the three-quarter mask and the half mask are very popular now. These retain the mystery and allure of the French colonial costume balls and can be removed readily to wave or pose with demanding members of the public.

There has always been a wide technological span of masks ranging from Shortney – sieve fence-style masks with starched madras cotton and fanned out edges – to the earlier papier-mâché versions, moulded on clay, by Ken Morris from the old Sukuya band. These early examples ran the gamut of materials: from fibreglass and resin to recent vacuum-formed plastic prototypes. This matches almost exactly the currently acclaimed plastics arts practitioners of Benin, offering close comparisons with Misty's 1993 Chokwe-influenced heads. These, in turn, made connections with the older and much respected works of Ken Morris's father, and his brass creations.

Sometimes costume transformations are like old world iconoclasts daring to destroy revered ideas. Design tradition dictates King and Queen figures, but, for instance, Anton Holder's Bayie Basufo – over 16-years old with some 80 participants – keeps it's authentic flavour in the mid-90s without the standard King and Queen tableaux.

Regrettably, with more organisation on the road, bands have edged





FLIGHT OF FANCY: meticulous craftsmanship on a favourite theme

out folkloric characters. Smaller, roots style bands like Shortney have all but disappeared, though the veteran Mangrove band from All Saint's Road and Lawrence Noel's beautifully crafted Red Indian themes preserve the vibrancy of original masqueraders.

One major change in the last few years has been the built-up central judging platform sited in Westbourne Grove Road. Streamlined routes and set entry points now mean it's much easier to see all the bands. This has given the spectacle an At-Home-In-The-Savannah feel that serious culcha tourists can enjoy.

Notting Hill has reached the stage now where the creative cults influencing its costume world have gone through as many of their own metamorphoses as syntheses with cultures from elsewhere. But, hold on, is this eclectic mix of forms that we call Carnival *really* just a vamped up ol' slave party?

Leslée Wills lectures in Carnival arts and textiles. She has taken part in the last 17 Notting Hill Carnivals.

A million hours to make

MAREK WASNIEWSKI

IN A SMALL HOUSE IN LEYTONSTONE lives the grandfather of Carnival Masquerado, Lawrence Noel. On the living room walls and up the stairs are the colourful head-dresses and showpieces from Carnivals past. Wire frames for head-dresses are neatly stacked in the corners of his living room. A roll of wire, cutters, pliers and a tape measure lie nearby. He pulls out an album of photographs and press cuttings that chronicle the history of the costume bands at Notting Hill. "This is how it all started, I want you to know..."

For over twenty years he has run his mas camp from home, where successive generations have passed through his hands and gone on to form their own mas bands. That is how the Carnival has grown. I help him sort through a garage piled full of costumes from last year, a cavern full of dusty treasures. "Soon, this house will be buzzing full of children learning Carnival." It's an open invitation to return.

A few streets away, under converted railway arches, is the camp of Masquerade 2000. Lincoln Rahamut, the designer and inspirational figurehead, is proud of his work, and with good reason. It is meticulous in every detail, down to the placement of the last sequin.

M2 is organised with a capital O. A committee looks after designs, production and planning and the camp market their services and skills to other towns, like Luton and High Wycombe, eager to get up Carnival.

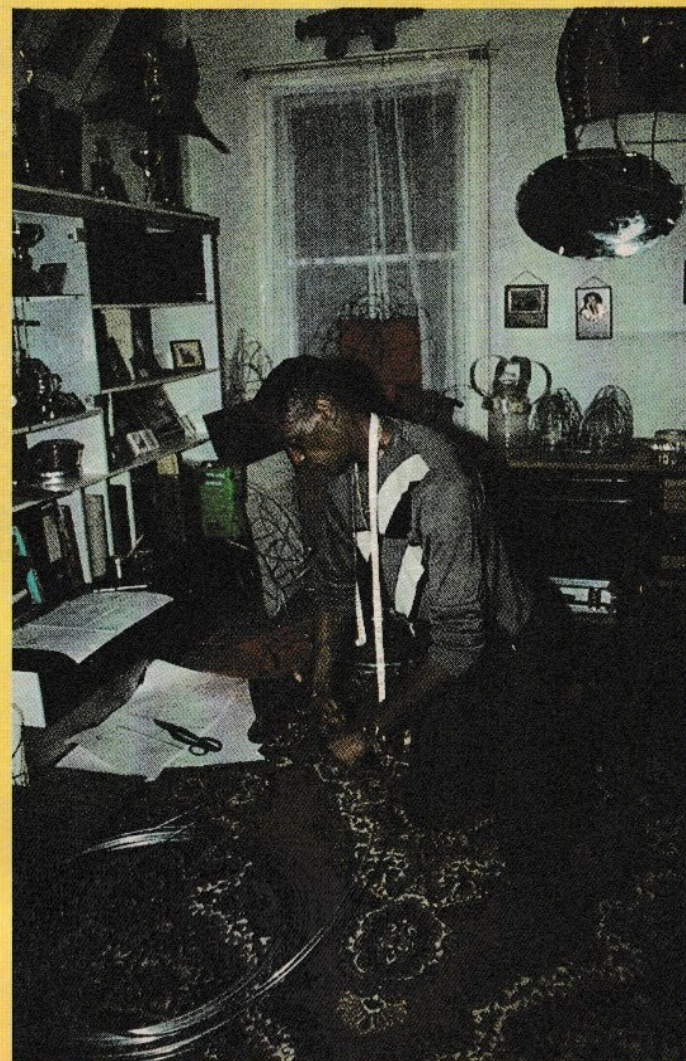
Young people belonging to the camp learn not only the artistic and practical skills of making costumes, they learn basic administration and how to run meetings. There is a job even for the youngest, glueing those all important sequins, for one. On my way out a visitor throws some rubbish into the nearby skip. "Hey! That's where we store our materials!"

Onto the Dalston Children's Centre run by Nat and Rosa. The centre's activities for local children continue throughout the year and planning for Carnival starts as early as January. The research work for this year's theme has taken Rosa to Kenya. They take their responsibility towards educating the young and the public in the 'hystery' of African cultural origins very seriously. It must be authentic.

Nat and Rosa work hard together, running lectures and workshops on every aspect of the current theme. The children are given a context which allows them to derive a personal meaning out of their involvement so that, with each passing year, their sense of identity and roots is assured and, with it, their confidence.

Sill in Dalston, up the road at Perpetual Beauty, I met JT. He gave me a tour of their workshops. Coming from a background in designing racing car body panels, John brought his structural expertise to this camp and his playful ingenuity. He also brought his courage, vision and innate understanding of the inclusive nature of Carnival. This camp is the first to have established a Carnival College, now in its second year., offering a more formal, structured training in Carnival Arts and raising the status of the craft.

As midnight came and went, we continued our conversation in the camp kitchen. There, two kids lay sleeping on the benches with gawping mouths. The camp really is an extended family. For John, Notting Hill is like Christmas in August. At his camp I could see that Carnival truly crosses racial divisions.



BEHIND THE SCENES: Lawrence Noel at work (above); 1994 designs (below)

Over 60 mas bands take part in Carnival, each with between 100 and 300 participants. Close to a million hours of patient, loving work go into making and decorating each costume, head-dress and float – as many hours work as there are people attending. The parade represents the ultimate celebration, the collective release of months of planning, designing and building. It can take a hold on your life. The competitive element hones the commitment and skills, for sure, but ultimately Carnival is not about competition. Witness the collaborative effort of nine mas camps at Spitalfields last year.

The essence of Carnival is a challenge to cynicism. In the words of Lawrence Noel, "it's not about colour, race or religion. It's about being a human being, about celebrating life, about being free to walk down the street with pride and self-respect. That's what I teach."

So, what do you have planned for the weekend? Are we still strangers? Come to the Carnival and see.

Marek Wasniewski is a writer and artist. He is currently setting up a project to launch the Grahamstown Carnival in South Africa.

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the carnival guide

95.8 CAPITAL FM

L O N D O N



Carnival Route

Childrens Route*

Blocked Roads

Underground Stations

First Aid Posts

Toilets (with disabled access)

Information Points

Sound Systems

Ministry of Sound & Saxone

95.8 CAPITAL FM

L O N D O N

N.Y. Lug Co Presents
Tim Westwood of the
Carnival Rap Show

Touch Magazine

The Official 1994
Notting Hill Carnival
Soft Drink



*NB: The Children's Carnival Route follows the same course as the southern part of the main route until the junction of Elkstone Road and Goldbourne Road where it bears left to rejoin the main route on Ladbroke Grove.

Buses

Notting Hill Gate: Eastbound

94 to Trafalgar Square via Oxford Street

Notting Hill Gate: Westbound

94 to Acton via Shepherds Bush

Kensington Church Street: Northbound

27 to Camden Town via Paddington and Baker Street

28 to Golders Green via Kilburn and West Hampstead

31 to Camden Town via Kilburn and Swiss Cottage

52 to Willesden

Kensington Church Street: Southbound

27 to Turnham Green via Kensington and Hammersmith



Chelsea via Kensington and Earls Court
52 to Victoria via Kensington

Harrow Road: Westbound
7 to East Acton & Kew
18 to Sudbury via Harlesden and Wembley
36 to Queens park
52 to Willesden

Harrow Road: Eastbound
7 to Russell Square via Paddington and Oxford Street
18 to Baker Street
23 to Aldwych via Paddington, Oxford Street and Trafalgar Square
36 to Peckham via Paddington and Victoria
52 to Victoria via Kensington

Elgin Avenue: Southbound
28 to Wandsworth via Kensington and Earls Court
36 to Peckham via Paddington and Victoria
302 to Mill Hill via Willesden (northbound)

Elgin Avenue: Northbound
28 to Golders Green via Kilburn and West Hampstead
31 to Camden Town via Kilburn and Swiss Cottage
36 to Queens Park.

Underground

| Times: | Sunday | Monday |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Ladbroke Grove | Closed | Closed |
| Latimer Road | 07:00 - 00:15 | 04:55 - 01:00 |
| Notting Hill Gate | 05:30 - 24:00 | 05:30 - 24:00 |
| Royal Oak | 07:00 - 00:15 | 04:55 - 01:00 |
| Westbourne Park | 07:00 - 23:00 | 04:55 - 22:50 |

Customers coming from the West (Hammersmith, Shepherds Bush etc.) are advised to alight at Latimer Road and walk to the Carnival, as Westbourne Park becomes very congested.

Notting Hill Gate is Way Out in the morning and Way In in the evening.

Westbourne Park will be Way Out only until 17:00 on both days. Customers wishing to leave the Carnival area before this time should use Royal Oak or Latimer Road stations.

NB: It would help enormously if London Underground customers could, where possible: • Buy a return ticket at the beginning of their journey. • Have their ticket ready when exiting at their destination. • Use the full length of the platforms. • Listen to customer information on public address systems.

Because of the larger than average numbers of people on the stations it is necessary to close the stations for a short period until the numbers of passengers within the station has been reduced to a safe level.

West Indian carnival time now starts at 6pm on weekdays.

BT has extended the international Cheap Rate period. So Cheap Rate now starts at 6pm on weekdays and lasts all weekend.

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a song for the departed

November 6 1993. The Lancaster Road Methodist Church. Notting Hill's steelband fraternity gather to mourn Philmore Gordon Davidson, or 'Boots', to all those who knew and loved him.

PHILMORE DAVIDSON, who died last October, was a legend in his own right. But who was Boots? Or, more importantly, what did Boots *represent*? He represented an era in the evolution of the steel pan, in which panmen were the scourge of society, largely because of snobbery brought on by zealous adherence to colonial views and values.

Who knows who invented steelpan. Accounts of the history of pan suggest that it was part of a natural evolution in the range of percussive instruments of that era. We know that the original steel pans were developed from oil drums left by American Soldiers during World War II. To obtain music by tuning the pan – and not just striking up a rhythm – was a great feat. Boots was legendary in that respect, he was hailed as the man who put Mozart on pan with his arrangement of Nocturne in



DIRGE WITH A DIFFERENCE: tributes in flowers to Boots Davidson at his funeral (above), and in pan, the medium he perfected (left)



E Flat Major and the man who invented the guitar pan.

Pan was the instrument of the young, robust black boys and men. It was the instrument developed by the poor and all those associated with it endured social stigmatisation and ostracism. The bad boys. Women who could not keep away from it risked adverse comments about their virtue. Why were the authorities afraid of this development? The answer is simple: it caused young men to gather together in numbers. Fear of revolution and insurrection led to a determination to stifle its impact by frustrating the players. Very few pan players of that era were able to avoid harassment and incarceration by the authorities for playing pan.

The story of the pan man is a woeful and powerful tale of oppression, suppression and wasted lives. Those alive today will all too willingly recall the oppression and will openly claim "I could have been a doctor, lawyer, teacher, journalist, if it wasn't for pan!" It was an addictive force.

But how seriously do we take what they say? A lot of our younger panists are dismissive of the struggle for pan, perhaps in ignorance of its development, for we are guilty of failing to teach and tell our children our history. It would appear that our history is not important until it is too late to recall it with any accuracy. And as time wears on we have distorted versions of events to a point where each man and each woman defines an event according to their perception, putting themselves at the forefront of the event, the hero.

Philmore Gordon Davidson was the seventh child in a family of seven. From an early age many hopes were pinned on his achieving greatness. He showed academic brilliance from the outset of his school career, winning two scholarships for free secondary education. These were important opportunities for any man coming from a family where every penny counted. But he turned his back on



these, preferring instead to follow music. His world as a child was full of it – but full of music of the conventional variety. One could not call oneself a musician unless one was able to master the works of the European music masters like Mozart, Bach and Schumann. And that he did, and he did it on pan.

“Boots was hailed as the man who put Mozart on pan.”

He was part of the steelband which participated in the Festival of Britain in 1952. He returned to Trinidad after that visit but within four years had come back to England, sent by his family to “cool off”. He was never to return to Trinidad except for two brief visits in the 1980s.

Like so many West Indian men, he worked with British Rail as a shunter but there he damaged his pan-playing hands. So he left and began to study journalism and teach the art of pan.

He never completed his journalistic studies but instead went on to become a teacher of pan in a number of schools in London. He was an arranger, writer and tuner of pan and pan music. Together with people like Gerald Forsythe, Randolph Baptiste, Frank Rollock and others, he went on to become part of the Pan Players Academy, set up to pursue the development of pan within Europe.

He was outstanding as a teacher, he was outstanding as the leader of the pack. Six foot two inches tall, erect and agile, handsome and well spoken, and given the name Boots because of his size 15 feet, he exuded confidence and charisma which few could have resisted. His contemporaries who knew him and worked with him in Casablanca and Syncopators Steel Orchestra in Trinidad, Mangrove, Eclipse, Colville School, Addison School, Pan-

tonic and others speak of him with fondness.

His death was untimely, taking everyone by surprise. A stunned steelband fraternity in Notting Hill was still recovering from the deaths of Lennard, Nancy, Doggy and others who had contributed to the growth of steelpan in this country and who had all recently died. “We know,” they said, “the Lord took Boots because he wanted to complete that steelband in the sky. He could not do without the master”. Less than six weeks later, we also learned of the tragic death of Elizabeth Karenina Rollock, a leading light of the London All Stars Drum Band.

The funeral of Boots took place on Saturday 6 November 1993. For two weeks prior to the funeral, Mangrove steelband rallied the community with drumming, pan music, prayers and exhortations. We will not forget how Notting Hill and panmen everywhere mourned Boots.

It could be said that the funeral was excellent. It was talked about for weeks afterwards. The cortege wound its way

through the streets of Notting Hill led by steelbands Ebony, Mangrove, Eclipse, Pantonic and Metronomes followed by a thousand mourners on foot and in cars. They all played *My Way*, to emphasise the fact that Boots lived his life to his standards and was known for the fact that he had refused to allow himself to be compromised by

the hardships endured in trying to earn a living as an immigrant in Britain. Renditions of *Only You* and *Some-where Over the Rainbow* were given by the Colville School Steel Orchestra, with a memorable jazzy performance of *Nocturne in E Flat Major* from Frank Rollock on the Tenor Pan.

Much was said about this great man, the King of Steel. He loved and was greatly loved in return.

*Philmore Gordon Davidson, ‘Boots’:
September 12 1923 to October 23 1993*



THE ROAD MAKE TO WALK: “Wherever one goes, the other does seem to follow”.

‘Lest we forget’

DARCUS HOWE

FROM SEVERAL VANTAGE POINTS within the Carnival movement I have seen them come and go. The shining stars, the dross, the flotsam and jetsam. And there are stories to be told, wistful anecdotes of deep and abiding friendships. Mournful dirges for those who have disappeared into the night.

I had only just returned from Jamaica when Lennard called. Nancy was back in hospital. Lennard had been to see him and reported that he was on his last legs. I teased Lennard. Where did you get your medical degree? In the Mangrove restaurant? He chuckled then paused: “No, no, it’s serious”.

And within a couple of days Nancy confessed to Josie, his wife, in the still of the morning that he was tired. He died within minutes, after a bruising and lengthy battle with cancer. He was 64 years old.

Rudolph ‘Nancy’ Woods arrived at Southampton Docks in 1960, a stowaway from Trinidad with a pair of loaded dice in his pocket, the Carnival spirit in his heart and not much else. He hailed from Corbeau Town, a city slum which spawned the steelband, Red Army, to which he belonged.

Others came, too, from steelbands the length and breadth of the country. Lennard Waithe, Philmore Davidson and Zigilee (Casablanca and Syncopators), Eamon Thorpe (Crossfire), Brains, Clydie, Will and Pan (Desperadoes), Cecil and Kidd (Ebonites), Allowsingh (Sun Valley), Rockie (Fascinators), Inskip, Turtle Back, Vesta and Kid Coolie (Harabuntas), Victor ‘Baby Elephant’ Henry (Sunland) and yours truly (Renegades). A fraternity developed in Notting Hill’s black community, rechristened The Grove.

I do not know if Nancy kept his loaded dice but along with Boots Davidson, Lennard Waithe and ‘Baby Elephant’ Henry he became a feature at the Rio Cafe which housed a gambling den under the auspice of the quiet and reserved Frank Critchlow of Invaders. Nancy, like the others, was a dear friend.

I last saw him at Baby Elephant’s funeral. He looked drawn, his complexion had changed with the constant chemotherapy. He greeted me as usual with a drink of brandy. I found him overpowering that day, constantly attending to my every need. I couldn’t understand it. I know now that he was aware that the end was nigh.

Our lives, Nancy’s and my own, in the steelband movement in Trinidad afforded an easy transference to the streets of Notting Hill. Nancy, Lennard, Boots and Victor surfaced again as key figures on the movement’s Road to Damascus. These men were soldiers of commitment not soldiers of fortune.

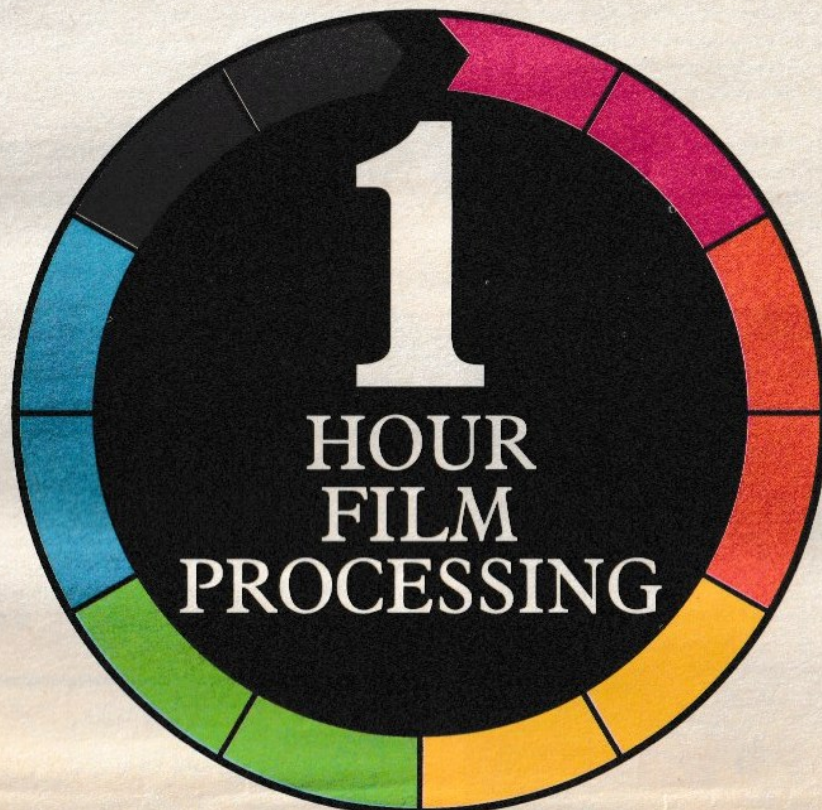
And they fell like nine pins. First Baby Elephant, then Nancy, and just as we recovered, Lennard collapsed as a virus tore through his lithe and athletic frame. Boots spoke at his funeral. His words were ominous if not portentous. He remarked that when he, Boots, left the Casablanca band to form another, the City Syncopators, Lennard followed him. When he left Trinidad to come to England, Lennard had followed and when he started the Mangrove steelband Lennard again followed. “And it does seem,” said Boots in that way of his, “that wherever one goes, the other follows.” How true. Within weeks Boots was dead.

Without the Woods, the Waithe, the Henrys and without the Davidsons of this world, our movement would be so much the poorer.

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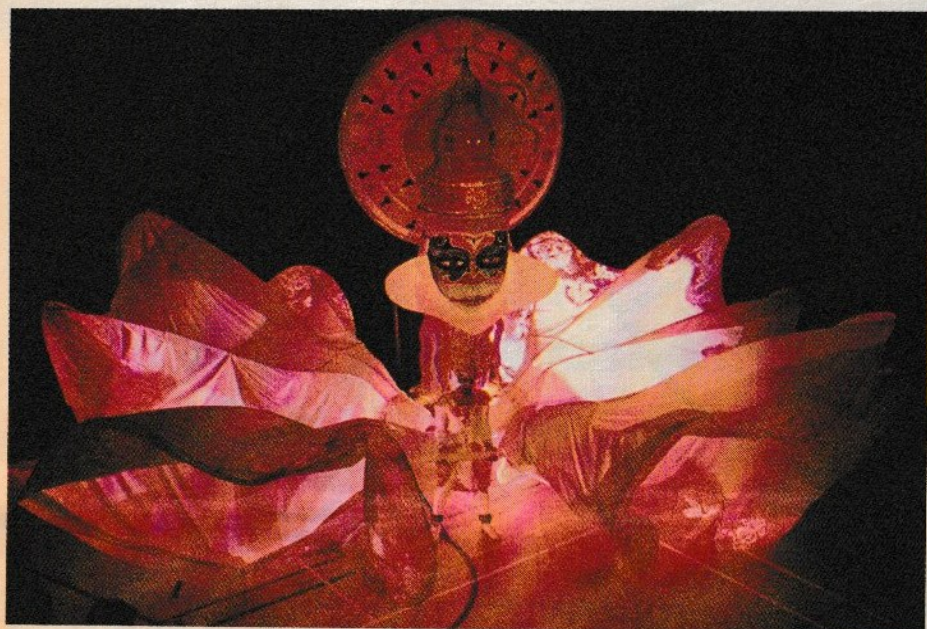
THE CARNIVAL KING

KARL MORRIS is not your average accountant. Notting Hill Carnival King three times and a former Carnival King in Trinidad, where he flies every year, without fail. "Carnival is wonderful because it makes people lose their inhibitions. You can't help it, the atmosphere sweeps you up," he says.

Karl has played mas with Mahogany for the past six years and wouldn't perform for another band unless they had a better designer - "and that would be impossible". Clary Salandy designs for Mahogany and the secret of their success, Karl believes, is that whatever theme Clary thinks up, you can see it and feel it in the finished costume. The costumes have also been in demand outside the Carnival. Mahogany has been invited to Paris three times.

Both Carnivals are the high points of his year, although Karl wishes there were more pre-Carnival events in this country such as a Gala for picking the King and Queen of Carnival. "I don't think you see the best of the costumes on the road, there are too many distractions." He would also like to see more people getting involved in Carnival, bigger mas bands and more spectators in London. His Majesty urges: "Carnival is for everyone, whoever you are."

■ CHE WHITELAW



The Mighty Tiger roars again

THE CALYPSO MONARCH



ASHTON MOORE, 'THE MIGHTY TIGER', is one of the Granddaddys of Calypso music. He was Britain's first Calypso Monarch and has been participating in the Notting Hill Carnival ever since. Twenty-three years.

Born in Trinidad, both Carnival and Calypso are a way of life. He performed at the Calypso

Review and Victory tents in Port-of-Spain before settling onto the scene in London. Calypso is a way of life he wants to pass on to children in Britain.

"Calypso is a happy music, it is the rhythm of the mind and body," he says. "There are lots of young people who want to sing calypso but many don't have the opportunity or the encouragement when most of their friends are into music like rap."

Ashton has helped to set up a Calypso workshop which not only teaches children to sing calypso, but also the history of the music which he feels helps children enjoy it more as well as making them more aware of their roots. He is very proud of Andrea Hernandez, who won the first ever Junior Calypso Monarch competition last year. Andrea's success was the best publicity Calypso could have had among children and teenagers in Britain and Ashton has watched the attendance at the workshop grow.

Although Calypso is often used as a vehicle of protest, Ashton finds his inspirations "from anywhere. The air we breathe, the water we drink and the sun that warms us. All these things we take for granted which give us life." Ashton loves the Notting Hill Carnival even more than Carnival in Trinidad because of the sheer mass of people that come to watch and party in the streets. Oh, and he expects to win again this year.

■ CW

Sisters doin' it for themselves

THE JUNIOR CARNIVAL QUEENS

FOR SARAH JANE AND SALLY ANN RAHAMUT Carnival is a family affair. Sally Ann has been on the road since she was six weeks old, carried in her parents arms in a body costume, and later in a baby walker designed by her father, Lincoln. Sarah Jane can hardly remember how long she has been on the road.

Last year was the first time Sarah Jane had won a competition in Carnival, having come second the year before. "Winning was brilliant, really good." It was even better when she found out her big sister had also won the 16-19 year-old Best Queen.

Both girls want to win again this year and are very confident. They are very proud of their band, Masquerade 2000, and of their father, its founder. "We have won best band two years in a row and we want to make it a hat trick this year," said Sarah Jane. "None of my school friends believe me when I tell them I'm in the Carnival."

Both girls travel all over the country going to different Carnivals and will travel to the King and Queen Gala in Trinidad later in the year. Whether in costume or just a T-shirt and whistle: "We have fun no matter what we're doing in Carnival."

■ CW



Ebony forever

STEELBAND CHAMPIONS

STEELBAND MUSIC is part of Trinidad's cultural heritage and the Ebony Steelband is fast becoming a tradition at Notting Hill. The band, led by Pepe Francis, has been taking part in Carnival for 29 years and have been the Panorama Champions six times, including the last three years on the trot - a record - as well as winning Best Steelband On-The-Road competition nine times.

The band's costume section has also won Carnival Queen four times and Pepe himself has won King of Carnival six times, although these days he prefers to concentrate on the music. Pepe puts the band's success down to their having the best of everything, "...the best players, the best instruments and the best musical arrangement." Ebony have also performed at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, backed Billy Ocean and the Rolling Stones and have recorded in Trinidad and Grenada.

Ebony have also completed nationwide tours and had performances televised nationwide. Despite the demands made on him, Pepe still finds the time to work as a consultant, setting up Carnivals in other towns around the country. That, he hopes, will be his legacy to Carnival in Britain.

■ CW



For a full list of '93 winners turn to page 34.



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COMPETITION RESULTS 1993

CALYPSO MONARCH

1. The Mighty Tiger (Ashton Moore)
2. The Reverend Sweetfoot (Don Caesar)
3. Prince Yacob (Berris Henriques)

JUNIOR CALYPSO MONARCH

1. Lady Punni (Andrea Hernandez)
2. Mega Titch (Roland Fearon)
3. Soca Sensation (Karla Joseph)

PANORAMA – BEST STEELBAND

1. Ebony Steelband
2. Metronomes Steel Orchestra
3. Mangrove Steel Orchestra
4. Glissando

BEST STEELBAND ON-THE-ROAD

1. Metronomes Steel Orchestra
2. Ebony Steelband
3. Nostalgia Steelband
3. Pantonic Steel Orchestra

BEST SOCA ON-THE-MOVE

1. Soca Massive
2. D.J. Bambino
3. Club Zouk Sounds

BEST ADULT'S BAND ON-THE-ROAD

1. Masquerade 2000
2. Perpetual Beauty
3. Dragons

BEST ADULT MALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Charles De Peza (Masquerade 2000)
2. Shaun Carrington (Genesis)
3. Ian Khan (BWIA Cocoyea)

BEST ADULT FEMALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Claudette Carrington (Genesis), Shirley Da Silva (Perpetual Beauty), Francoise Riley (M2)
2. Vanya Raeburn (Misty), Debbie Greaves (Dragons)
3. Lynne Reynolds (Flamingo)

BEST ADULT KING

1. Carl Morris (Mahogany)
2. Mat King (St Clements)
3. Vernon Williams (Genesis)

BEST ADULT QUEEN

1. Marlyn Homer (Stardust)
2. Sharon Marshall (Dragons)
3. Maria Blade (Masquerade 2000)

CHILDREN'S GALA RESULTS

0-4 YEARS

BEST MALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Masquerade 2000 – Antonio Grazette
2. Trinidad and Tobago – Aaron McKenzie
3. Perpetual Beauty – Adrian Da Silva

BEST FEMALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Perpetual Beauty – Jade Gardiner
2. Masquerade 2000 – Danielle Okoh
3. Coffee Boys and Girls – Kimley Alberto

BEST KING

1. Perpetual Beauty – Kingsley Thomas
2. Masquerade 2000 – Deji Bakare
3. Phoenix – Kieran Daley-Ward

BEST QUEEN

1. Dragons – Cherello Bovell
2. Flamingo – Anwar Fevrier
3. Misty – Simone Mulrain

5-10 YEARS

BEST MALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Masquerade 2000 – Andre Boucaud
2. Trinidad And Tobago – Christian Sookoo
3. Perpetual Beauty – Brian Gravillis

BEST FEMALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Masquerade 2000 – Sarah Jane Rahamut
2. Perpetual Beauty – Lycreshia Paul
3. Phoenix – Victoria Robinson

BEST KING

1. Stardust – Fan De Grasse
2. Perpetual Beauty – Amandla Thomas
3. Trinbago – James Wheatley Noel

BEST QUEEN

1. Perpetual Beauty – Karlene Thomas
2. Stardust – Alicia Bernandez
3. Dragons – Nicole Greaves

11-15 YEARS

BEST MALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Masquerade 2000 – Tyrone Franklin
2. Genesis – Shaun Carrington
3. Trinbago – James Whestley Noel

BEST FEMALE INDIVIDUAL

1. Perpetual Beauty – Jemma Taylor
2. Masquerade 2000 – Samantha Julien
3. Flamingo – Melanie Walker

BEST KING

1. Mahogany Et Brent Youth Arts – Vincent
2. Masquerade 2000 – Christopher Blake
3. Flamingo – David Alexander

BEST QUEEN

1. Mahogany Et Brent – Juanita Scott
2. Misty – Danielle Mulrain
3. Perpetual Beauty – Michelle Gravillis

16-19 YEARS

BEST KING

1. Mahogany Et Brent Youth Arts – Daniel Ramdeen
2. Perpetual Beauty – Lucky Thomas
3. Masquerade 2000 – Toks Bakare

BEST QUEEN

1. Masquerade 2000 – Sally Ann Rahamut
2. Perpetual Beauty – Samantha Gravillis
3. Phoenix – Nikki Gonzales

BEST CHILDREN'S BAND ON-THE-ROAD

1. Masquerade 2000
2. Perpetual Beauty
3. Misty

NIGHTS WITH MORE BITE

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The Cheap Rate period for calls to India now starts at 6pm on weekdays and lasts all weekend.

BT *It's good to talk*

index masquerade bands

Notting Hill would be nothing without its costume parade. Playing mas', or masquerade, is a celebration of the Carnival experience in dance and design, in sequins and steel. It's easy to get swamped on the route, so here's an A-Z of this year's masqueraders, their themes and players...

Arte Nouvelle, under the charge of Alfred Walcott, come out this year as *The Celestial People*. They're a small band but their members have Carnival CVs that stretch right back to Trinidad in 1953. Forty members on the road celebrating high-tech high fantasy, led by Her Celestial Highness the Queen. Lavish designs in waves of gold, blue and pink.

Viv White's **Atlantis**, from Leicester, are a band aiming to bring back ideas from Ole Mas, and an emphasis on elaborate costumes rather than ambitious structures. Their *Mythical City of Atlantis* theme has 50 on the road, including Lord Neptune, the ruler of Atlantis in his long flowing robes and crown.

Alexander and Seventh Feathers are at Carnival for the third time with bigger numbers than ever. Led by Kim Ready, their theme for '94 is *Equal Rights*.

Balisaye - aka Duchess Rollock, Theresa Thomas, Melanese Ray and the London All Stars - have been involved at Notting Hill for more than 15 years.



CHILD'S PLAY: mas begins young

They storm onto the scene this year with *Blowin' in the Wind*, a theme combining the costumes, creativities and kites of up to 100 participants, divided into sections representing tornadoes, monsoons and whirlwinds. Whoosh.

Carnivalists for over a decade, Anton Holder's **Bayle Busufo** ('nomadic spirits') have a theme which draws on Ole Mas traditions of pun and parody. The costumes for this year's *Mantis Wining in de Gr'ass* are sophisticated in design, portraying the mantis, with prominent mandibles, clearing a path to its prey, a chameleon-like

creature camouflaged within its habitat. A foray into the insect world, this 'wining' taps into the flowing spirit of Carnival with typical licence.

As a band, **BeeRaahar** are Carnival debutants, although David Grant and Christina Oree have been involved with various festivals since 1978. As individuals, they have gained honours at Notting Hill before and *The Gold of Guyana* is an eye-catching mas with shovels, pickaxes, pork-knackers and cutlasses in red, black and loads of glittering gold.



SAMBA TIME: the rhythm of Rio

Tottenham's **Burrokeets** Cultural Club, led by Joan Sam, have been brightening up Carnival for three years and 1994 brings more of the same. The 200 masqueraders of *Spectrum* promise a rainbow of colour: The Colour Purple, Blue Nile, Pinkissimo, Explosion in Orange, White Diamonds, Black Gold, Forever Amber and Evergreen, to be precise, headed by a King and Queen for each section, attired in appropriate colours, decorated with sequins, glitter and gold and silver trim to reflect the sun. Shades recommended.

Caribbean Carnival Club set last year's Carnival ablaze with *Fire Starter*. Their 1994 *On Safari* is led by John Cummings and headed by a Queen Bee, in dazzling black and gold, and a tribal chief as Carnival King. The 120-strong parade also features killer bees, lost civilisations and the snow-capped peaks of Kilimanjaro. Oh, and look out for the Tarantula.

Innovative designs by Sue Chester and inspiration from Leonard Francis and the old Carnival hands at **Chat's Palace** has produced *East Springs Westway*. It features King and

Queen costumes made of spiralling shapes, moving independently around and above the body. Fluorescent colours, echoing the spiral theme link the floor sections with the King and Queen. The theme embodies the Carnival experience of flux and exchange. Get right among 'em.

Several of **Club Zouk's** members have been involved at Notting Hill since 1972. This year's theme, led by Lloyd Bertrand, works around African and Francophone cultural influences on Caribbean music and mas traditions. Central is the Tabala, the drum of communication. Likewise *De Sensay*, a section of the mas evolved from the African lore of spirits and myths while the Robe Douillette section derives from the coffee plantations of the late 17th century. *Bef La Lagé* translates roughly as 'the cow gets loose' a phrase from Emancipation and a warning to the old plantocracy of the independent minds of ex-slaves. The Real Thing.

Dedicated to the preservation of Caribbean culture, Dexter Khan's **Cocoyea** have traditionally brought the sound of Trinidad to Notting Hill. *Gavotte* draws on soca dance traditions of the '20's and '30's. Last year they were joined by visiting calypsonians, Prince Unique, the United Sisters and Singing Francine and, in 1992, had Mr Dollar Wine. This year, with



TRUE SIOUX: the enduring Amerindian theme

designer Wayne Berkelay (who has won top awards in Trinidad for the past six years), Cocoyea are essential viewing. Essential listening too with Roy Cape and the Calypso Allstars plus the Smokey Joe Roadshow.

A taste of the Barranquilla Internacional Carnaval from Nury Mesa's **Cuero NãMa**. A

parade of 300, with 15 musicians, have brought the characters of Colombian Carnival into the idiom of Notting Hill for a decade. This year's *La Piragua*, describes the trade of the fruit seller on his boat with the villagers, portrayed by three dance groups performing conga, porro and guajira, along Rio Magdalena. Visual images are put together by the Colombian costume designer Olga Manchester and sounds provided by a folkloric band with La Cumbia rhythms.



IN THE PINK: Lawrence Noel's Aztec design

Dallaway, from Newham, are a band with a strong accent on youth and *High Potential* is both their theme and their target. Expect an eclectic mixture of costumes, all depicting the summit of achievement, the aspirations of the band's young members. Led by Sylvester Dallaway.

Another African theme from the 120-strong **Dalston Childrens Centre** who last year produced the *Hystery of Kemet*, a vibrant enactment and interpretation of ancient Egypt. *Afrika - Ancient and Modern Images* is divided into four sections: Elders, Hunters, Warriors and Dancers, led by an African King and Queen and the Griots, the storytellers and praise singers. The work of Rosa Noel Jones and Nat Goodridge.

Design in Mind, the band led by Darren Alexander, are veteran masqueraders flying the flag this year for international unity and drawing on Caribbean traditions. Their *Flag Party* theme is a parade of Trinidadian, Jamaican, American, British and cosmopolitan flag parties with a Fantasy of Flags and the Flag Woman Bacchanal at its head. Get some Ting an Wave!

Disguised Illusion are making their first

appearance as a Notting Hill band, although over half their members have been involved at Carnival with other groups over the years. *Sea Life (The Next Generation)* has more than 70 on the road. Catch the Rays, Mermaids, Starfish, Lobsters, Lion Fish, Viper Fish, Sea Horses, Ambassador Fish, Jelly Fish, Puffers, Crabs, Seals, and, of course, Carnival Fish. Keep an eye out, too, for the elusive Black Pearl.

A band of nearly 50 on the road, **Dominica Sisserou** have been involved with Notting Hill for a number of years and have researched their theme, *The Roman Gladiators*, with diligence and energy. Led by Ophelia Jules, look out for their Carnival Queen, empress in leather, chiffon and satin, as the band carves out a Roman road through Notting Hill.

Last year Jean Cox's outstanding Party On The Road gave **Dragons** third place in the Adults Band on the Road and second places for Best Adult Queen (Sharon Marshall) and Best Adult Female (Debbie Greaves). Dragons have definitely come of age. The club evolved ten years ago from a group of Trinidadians who met to play All Fours, their national card game and have grown into this year's 150-strong *Shadows of the Mind* parade which incorporates more daring, dazzling designs: a King's costume with large, mobile wing attachments, backed by a fusion of colour. Come out to party. Again.

Ebony are backed by the legendary steelband under Pepe Francis and with this year's designs coming direct from the Trinidadian Carnival designer, Roger Myers, expect something special. *The Wild West's* three Sections explore indigenous Amerindian tribes (Sioux, Apache, Cammanchie and Black Foot), Cowboys and Mexicans.

Elimu means 'knowledge' in Swahili and the band of that name are consistently exploring roots in the Caribbean and beyond. Pat C Jaggs' *Aladdin's Cave* sparkles with individuals representing different gems, in three sections differentiated by colour and costume but co-ordinated by specific, recurring structures. More than fifteen years at Carnival, Elimu still 'mash up de Grove'.



ZULU IMPI: leopard skins and spears

An exploration of eastern cultures from the West Indian Development Organisation, **Eastern Promise's** inspiration for *Far East Asia* comes from traditional costumes of Burma and Thailand, worn by warriors and maidens in a 70-strong parade with many years of Notting Hill knowhow.

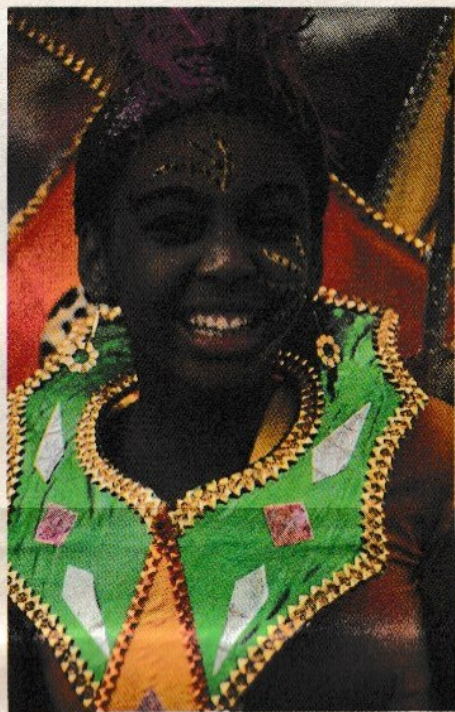
Across continents, **Emashi** African Arts and Entertainment have performed at Notting Hill for five years. Its members are trained dancers who perform all year round and its Carnival floats are always vibrant and vivacious. Led by Ngozi, a 70-strong band this year portray the great *Zulu Warrior Kings* and Queens and depict traditional Zulu society in all its ancestral authenticity.

Flamboyant are still going strong after more than a decade at Notting Hill. They'll be 50 on the road this year with *Jump Up And Kiss Me*, Gloria Cummins leading four sections each symbolising the kiss: lips engulfed in flames, lips surrounded by make-up kits, the King's kiss macabre, lips surrounded by the rays of the sun. Sealed with a kiss.

Flamingo are entering their second decade at Carnival, having toured nationwide. Their *Four Seasons* follows the success of their 1993 *Destruction of the Rain Forests*. Now they are harnessing the personification of seasonal cycles. Their parade features a spiky Jack Frost, an Ice Queen, a Sun God, a Sun Queen, the Autumn Twirl, Hot Blossom and heaps of enthusiasm, effort and imagination.

Front Page, led by Barbara Francis, are in the pink. A band of about 15 on the road portraying *Equality* in costumes of satin, sequins and feathers, in pink and white.

Genesis stand proud among Carnival's biggest and most elaborate bands. Vernon Williams has won several designing awards and picked up third place for last year's Best Adult King. Claudette Carrington came joint first as Best Adult Female



ALL SMILES: the rainbow colours of Carnival

Individual, and Shaun Carrington second in the Male section. The golds of this year's *The People of Eldorado* ensemble are again likely to catch the eye, particularly the Carnival King, with his gold leaves, wheels and wings. Look out, too, for the Queen and her satellite dishes...

Hackney United, Dorothy Lewis's mas band, have a long history of Carnival participation and take their inspiration, once again, out of Africa. In the footsteps of last year's depiction of the Egyptians, comes *Shaka Zulu*, a parade of 40 to 50 individuals dressed in red, black and white, with warriors and dancers, witch doctors and the Zulu King. Usuthu!

Last year **Harambee** spaced out with their Planets of the Universe theme and for 1994 they're back down to earth to provide Notting Hill with its own buzzing *Garden Of Eden*. Led by Roy Cruickshank, all forms of life are here.

Hippos are an experienced, 250-strong Notting Hill outfit with menace in their gait. Matthew Hypolite leads a parade featuring *Jab Jabs* (devils) in the traditional Trinidadian mood of J'ouvert morning, so prepare for plenty of interaction. Cross-dressing and subversion are the order of the day.

London School of Samba draw on the carnival traditions of Brazil and Italy this year with designer Flavio Seitosa's *Carnival - Passion of the World*. The King (Mestre Sala) and Queen (Porta Baudreira) are characterisations of Columbine and Harlequin, reflecting the Italian influence. Desteque is the focal female from the Brazilian tradition,

representing 'Alegría': the joy of life. The whole parade combines to tell a story - the Enredo (the overall theme) accompanied by the bateria (drums) rhythm and cavaquinho (guitar).

Los Barbados, the mas band from Westbourne Park Garage led by Winston D Dottin, celebrate the Bajan experience in music and costume. They have almost 200 on the road in *Los Barbados*: a first section that's 30-strong, each dressed in the national costume of Barbados; section two has 100 masqueraders in designer shirts, lycra shorts and headbands in Bajan colours; section three consists of bandmembers fresh from taking part in the crop-over festival in Barbados earlier this summer. A celebration of that beautiful island.

Mahogany, 100-strong and six years old, have used hi-tech software in this year's *Rio Fantasia* designs and innovative materials in their big, bold costumes. Carnival by computer? But their theme is also a searching one, exploring the contradictions between the fantasy of the Rio Carnival and the reality of the lives of Brazil's street children. Led by Michael (Speedy) Ramdeen and Clary Salandi, this is Carnival with a conscience.

Clive Philip's **Mangrove** are a protest band, 50-strong with their military style *Wounded Soldier* in fatigues, flak-jackets and bandages. A parade of flags including ANC and Rasta colours will be flying high.

The subject of two television documentaries in the lead-up to Carnival '93, Essex-based **Mas-O-Rama's** numbers are increasing apace. Their profile has also been boosted by regular appearances nationwide. Ambitious costumes for *Ting's Wings* match a growing reputation after six years at Carnival and explore flight: a winged serpent for a King, backed by bats, a winged temptress and the Queen of wings in a group of 65 joined by 12 from Germany and led by Errol Romilly and Carol Gaspard. Mythological and futuristic, let them take you high.

Lincoln Rahamut is one of Carnival's legends. He set up **Masquerade 2000** two years ago, having helped established Perpetual Beauty. In 1993, M2 enjoyed outstanding success: the Best Adults Band on the Road, Charles de Peza's Best Adult Male Individual, Francoise Riley, the joint Best Adult Female on the Road, Maria Blake's



PHAROAH FLOAT: Sugumugu Sunday on parade

third place as Best Adult Queen and The Best Children's Band on the road, witness to their busy activity encouraging younger Carnivalists from Luton to Leytonstone. It was a good year. Sponsorships have followed and M2 now have a plate for the production of wings, a new mas camp and over 300 on the road this time round. This year's *The Mask Ball... RSVP* is a 'worldwide invitation to participate in Carnival', because the global scale of the mas draws inspiration from India to Iceland stopping over in China, Brazil, Oceania, the USA and the Caribbean along the way, winding up in Notting Hill, London, UK. Be there.

A young band, **Misty** are headed by a man with over 20 years of Notting Hill behind him. Carl Gabriel began his Carnival career as a pianist with *Ebony* in 1972 and was involved with *Stardust* as bandleader from 1983 to 1992. Misty debuted last year, with a first and third place for Junior Queens, a third place as the Best Band of the Year, Children's Section and a runner-up as best Adult Female Individual. 1994 has doubled their numbers to 150 and *By The Water Hole* portrays the flora, fauna and myths of community. The King is a mythical being based on the child's dreams and fears, the Queen a village elder, the guardian of the well. Look out too for a shoal of tropical freshwater fish and the water lily. Refresh yourself.

New Dimensions take their inspiration from Tchaikovsky. *Dance of the Swans*, an 80-person parade, draws on the characters of the ballet *Swan Lake*. The first section portrays Princess Odette and her companions, the second Princess Odile, disguised as Odette by her magician father to deceive her lover Prince Siegfried. The forms are based around the dual features of human and swan, intertwining white, gold, feathers, sequins and glitter. Bandleader: Charles Ambrose. Extra sparks: the Firebird section.

Nostalgia's Fancy Sailor is a parade with a naval flavour from a band who've been in the business since the 1970s. Look out for The Captain, The Admiral, The Military Police and even... The Wrens. Led by Sterling Bettancourt.

People's War is Carnival with attitude. Micheal La Rose's band have been around since the early 1980s, but their tradition reaches back to Trinidadian satire with bite. *Back to Basics Britain* depicts a (bygone) age of colonial decadence, visualised in purple and gold, Britain's decline as a world



FLAMBOYANT FEATHERS: winin' with panache

power - gold and rust - and the end of the empire in the colours of the Union Jack, portraying the delusion of former glory in modern times. The parade divides itself into five sections: Virtual Reality - drawing on the band's computer aided designs, Hardcore, Fuel for Recession, Throwing Away the Family Jewels and - one to keep 'em blushing - Scandal. Get radical.

Back in time, Jim Ives' *Lord of The Rings* is a legend told in mas. It plays out the journey of the mythical ring to its final destruction in fire, its characters, action forces and motivations played out by the 200 band members on the road. It'll be a mixture of panache and professionalism, because **Perpetual Beauty**, from Stoke Newington, are deservedly known for their energy and innovations, from their extensive involvement with Britain's first Carnival College to the first bed at Carnival, in last year's *The Scandal Now Start*. Joint winners of the 1993 Best Adult Female Individual, second best Band on the Road and second best Children's Band on the Road.

Phoenix's *In Loving Memory* is Monty Ward's celebration of the life of his father and mentor-in-mas Carlton St Hillare (better known as Satan) who died shortly after Notting Hill last year. Carlton made a distinguished and invaluable contribution to carnival arts in Trinidad and England for 47 years and this tribute is a cross-section of the historical, fantastical and original, drawing on a variety of concepts: the Indians of the American Plains, the Zulus, the Aztecs and Mayans and a colourful display of diffracted light called the Spectrum of the Universe.

Five years of participation and some memorable costumes, this year's **Pioneers and Their Offspring** mas, led by Jean Bernard, centres on temporal concepts and calls itself *It's About Time*. The Queen portrays a modern clock, a bronze and gold King depicts methods of time-telling in ancient worlds. Suns, moons, day and night. Make time to catch this one.

Quilombo do Samba, led by Jimmy Rodrigues are three years old and expecting an increase of 50 per cent membership on last year. *A Poet's Dream* harks back to Rio: dreaming of Brazilian culture and costumes, the poet is woken up at Notting Hill by the sound of – you guessed it – Quilombo do Samba. Two floats and eight sections, tracing the tropical dream through different Brazilian carnival traditions, from Fevo to Gaucho to Baihana. The King and Queen will bear the traditional flag followed by key characters from the Brazilian Carnival culture: the Destaque and the Mandrinha da Bateri.

S hademakers, Paul McLaren's Manchester-based band are keen to integrate European traditions and have performed as far afield as St Petersburg. Their sounds this year come from Germany. *Carnival-Carnivore* relies on innovative construction techniques trigger-operated inflatable parts, activating the metamorphoses during the procession. For instance, representations of gender

mythologies which devour their own personae and desires: The Food Chain and its victims, a Green Man as King, whose central trunk encompasses a male baby, the bringer of Armageddon; a Chameleon Queen, elaborate, accommodating and compromising. Prepare to be seduced.

Joan Francis' **South Connections**, from Kennington, are nothing if not versatile. This year a host of angels from the band who last year brought us Sex. At Carnival since the 80s, they're a band with growing membership, thanks to appearances at the Journey from JourOuvert at Spitalfields Market, the Woolwich Festival, Lambeth Country Show and Clapham Common. The 1994 theme, *Angels Of Our Time*, is designed by Roz Price and divides into celestial sections including Hell's Angels, Angels of Light, Fallen Angels, Charlie's Angels, Chrome Angels, Guardian Angels, Angel Fish and Angel Cake. They will, of course, be glorious.

Spektakular, led by Ethenia Smith, have chosen the *Festival of the Sun* for 1994. Costumes of fine silk and a 60-strong band depicting various manifestations of the sun. The King portrays a Chariot of Fire, the Queen of the Black Sun is a solar eclipse, surrounded by sunmaidens. Bask.

Buoyed by a successful 1993, Ruby Noblemunn's **Stamford Hill Carnival Club** take their inspiration for this year's *Sarnaounha: The People Resist* from Mali, West Africa and France. It tells the story of Sarnaounha, a leader, a warrior, a sorcerer and a real women's role model. It's a militaristic parade, with soldiers, officers and heaps of enthusiasm.

Marlyn Homer of **Stardust** was one of last year's Best Adult Queens, keeping up a tradition of Notting Hill success that has brought the West Acton group a regular scattering of prizes in the children's panorama. Not bad for a band who were only formed in 1983, as a steelband and mas camp. *Mortal Deception*, led by Randolph E Baptiste, is constructed around personifications of the deadly sins Vanity, Pride, Lust and Greed, and seeks to convey their dual nature: the Good as well as the more obvious Evil. Showers of money and hot colour. The costumes include use of paper tin foil, to

create a mirror effect.

St Clement and St James are part of a Community Development Project and a band who last year earned second place in the Best Adult King category (Nat King). *Splendour in the Grove*, 120 masqueraders, celebrates the diversity and harmony of multi-cultural life in the Notting Hill area. In four sections – Sugar and Spice, Beauty, Imagination and Hope – it is eclectic and creative. Look out for the Queen of Vanity.

Sixteen years at Notting Hill and Mary Woods' **St Mary of the Angels** are going from strength to strength. After an enjoyable interpretation of The Garden of Eden last year, a dip into *The Sea of Galilee* stays with the Biblical slant. The King depicts the wind, the Queen the wave, constructed in decorated cane. The rest of the 80-member band will portray Fisher Boys and the Sea Sparkle, but expect appearances from Mermaids and the Owl and the Pussycat.

Sugumugu Sunday, led by Lord Eric Carboo, are celebrating 20 years in the business of promoting African culture – everything from boxing tournaments to Egyptian hieroglyphics – not to mention more than 15 years enriching Notting Hill Carnival. This year's *Africa Forever* mas follows the successes at Powis Square in 1993 and features the Kings and Queens of Africa, famous folk characters from the continent, warriors and animals with structures of bamboo and raffia. Spectacular wooden masks and dance, all to the beat of the drum.

T ab's New Generation, the Tabernacle Children's band, have struggled through some lean years to keep up a vibrant participation at Notting Hill and last year's theme – Tramps and Vagrants – carried shades of irony alongside its inventiveness. Dave Curtis and Maggie Eastmond's 1994 *Rainbow Warriors* divides into seven sections, one for each colour of the rainbow. Key individuals include the Queen of the Sunset, the King of the Storm and the Dove of Peace.

This Generation are a mas band making their

first appearance at Notting Hill and their *Three Generations of Women* reflects the evolution of Carnival itself. It explores costumes styles from the 1950s, the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s, redesigned to express the strength, independence, unity and humour of generations of black British women, led by the Grandmother and Grandson, Queen and King respectively.

Trinidad and Tobago are a 60-strong band with strong links to the Caribbean and plenty of Carnival experience. *Reflections of the Sky*, led by Matthew C Roberts, depicts the gamut of climatic cycles: an adult King portraying the dark side of the rainbow, thunder and lightning and a Queen named Galathea, starry in silver and gold.

Trinbago are in their 21st year of Carnival and Lawrence Noel is a true godfather of Notting Hill, a guru of modern mas. Trinbago have exhibited all over London and held workshops aimed at spreading the Carnival message: one not simply of creative costumes but a culture of community, goodwill and happiness. This year's *The Last Stand* is another tour de force.

Twelfth Century's Fruits and Flowers is a delicate, delicious parade led by Ashton Charles. They've been at Notting Hill since 1975 and have played mas all over Britain. Look out for a Carnival King in a traditional fancy sailor costume and water melon headpiece and a Queen displaying a split star apple.

Y aa Asantewaa, masterminded by Shabaka Thompson, boast over 20 years of Carnival involvement. They're a project who are well known for promoting Zouk, Calypso and artists from all over the world and they bring to the 1994 Carnival a celebration of Africa and the African diaspora designed by Bandi Payne. *Wealth of Africa* is a 52-strong parade featuring the natural wealth and beauty of the continent's oil, water, sunshine and art, led by a King representing the glory of African kingship and a Queen depicting the Jewels of Africa. Expect the spectacular.

■ CLARE RICHARDS



Unleash the real taste of Carnival

in our Appleton Jamaican Rum Competition

Many say that Jamaica is the real mother of Carnival, the sounds, the laughter, and the glorious sunshine. It's certainly the home of the taste of Carnival, the liquid gold of Appleton Estate Special Jamaican rum, the island's top selling golden rum.

Appleton will be at Carnival this weekend, bringing the flavour of liquid gold to one of the world's biggest parties. They've even produced their own Appleton cassette capturing some of the very best Jamaican sounds around.

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RUNNERS UP: 50 prizes of a 35cl flask bottle of Appleton Jamaican Rum PLUS a copy of the special Appleton reggae cassette each.

Put your answers to the following Carnival questions on the back of a postcard or envelope, add your name and address together with the words 'I confirm that I am over 18', sign it, and post to: Appleton Rum Carnival Competition, 64 Linden Gardens, Chiswick, London W4 2EW to arrive no later than Friday 30th September, 1994.

QUESTION 1 In which other British city is a Carnival held on the same day as Notting Hill?

- a) BRISTOL b) HUDDERSFIELD c) LEEDS

QUESTION 2 At what time of the year is Jamaica's Carnival held in the island's capital, Kingston?

- a) MID-SUMMER b) EASTER c) NEW YEAR'S EVE

QUESTION 3 For what type of music is Jamaica most noted?

- a) REGGAE b) JAZZ c) FUNK

The winners will be the first 51 correct entries drawn following the closing date. Please indicate on your entry if you do not wish to receive details of further offers from Appleton Rum. Normal competition rules apply.

Why not try the taste of Carnival at any time?

Pour a measure of Appleton Estate Special rum into a tall glass, over ice, and add two tsp of sugar and the juice of a lemon. Stir gently and top up with sparkling orangeade. Garnish with a cherry and a piece of banana. Taste the party!

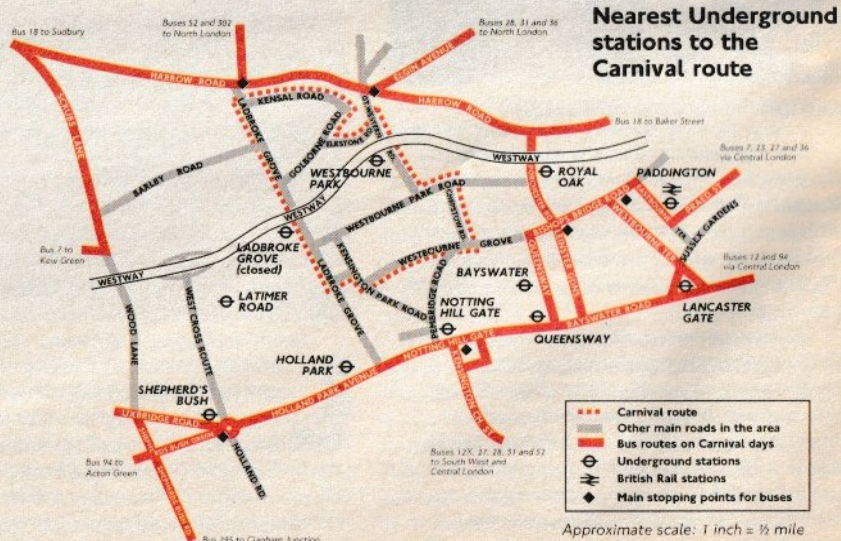


How to get to the Notting Hill Carnival

Sunday 28 and Monday 29 August

We hope that you have a wonderful time at this year's carnival, but it does get very congested on the Underground travelling to the area. Please buy a return ticket if possible.

We've produced a simple map of the carnival area, showing the most suitable stations. Pick up a free leaflet from any Underground station for full carnival travel arrangements.



Approximate scale: 1 inch = 1/2 mile



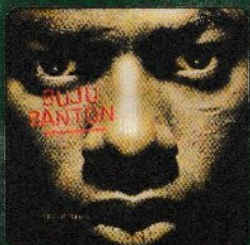
happy carnival from mercury



joe

everything

The newly crowned prince of R&B - "Everything" is Joe's debut album and includes the hit singles "I'm in Luv" and "The One for Me" - watch out for fantastic new mixes of "All or Nothing" and tour dates in the autumn.



buju banton

voice of jamaica

The undisputed reggae album of the year still sounding great time after time - a must for all true Jamaican Loyalists.



buju banton

mr mention

The young Buju delivers his first album - available on Mercury in the UK for a limited period only.



lighter shade of brown

layin' in the cut

The debut album from Chicano born hip hoppers featuring the massive cross-over summer smash "Hey DJ".



dread in the head

The definitive Mercury collection of 1994 - featuring artists ranging from the established Buju Banton, Black Sheep, Joe and David Morales through to new talent Yaggfu Front, Nefertiti, Al n Tedd Experience, Threat and The Legion.



prickly pair

liquidator

The re-worked unofficial Carnival anthem - released on Mercury to tie in with the Notting Hill Carnival 1994.



The Pakistani Carnival. Every weekend.

The Cheap Rate period for calls to Pakistan now starts at 6pm on weekdays and lasts all weekend.

BT It's good to talk

index

steelbands

Trinidad and Tobago's national instrument began life as an oil drum, abandoned on the islands by US troops after World War II. Turned upside down and tuned, the steel pan was formed and its melodies have been defining the Carnival sound ever since. Notting Hill's steelbands accompany the mas' bands and compete for popular appeal in the best Band-On-The-Road contest, and for technique in the Panorama ...



Ebony (left) have walked away with a championship hat-trick from the last three Carnivals. Notting Hill veterans of 29 years, Pepe Francis' ensemble spend the rest of the year touring, venues ranging from the Greek islands to Covent Garden Opera House and even Buckingham Palace. They have performed with the Rolling Stones and are currently Billy Ocean's backing band on a European tour. Arrangements by Annise Hadeed and a Panorama tune called *Fire Coming Down*. Serious vibes.

The **Metronomes** (below left) are still keeping perfect time and making good music with Eversley Mills as their bandleader. Formed 21 years ago, they have won the Panorama four times as well as the Steelband Music Festival Trophy. Musical versatility and a youthful membership are their strengths.

The late Boots Davidson gave them the name **Nostalgia** but Sterling Bettancourt's ensemble were among Notting Hill's very first steelbands back in 1963. Those were the days of Russ Henderson and Ralph Currie, whose

inspiration came from the 1951 Trinidad band, TASPO. Even now, they're still playing in a traditional style, their pans hung around their necks. Just the way it used to look.

Eclipse (bottom, right) are definitely not a band that keep themselves in the shade. Marcia Brown's high profile Carnival performers, arranged by Kurt Jagdeo, have played in Trinidad, Jamaica, all over Britain, and have plans for European tours. They were formed in 1986 in Haringey and have performed at Carnival ever since, creating a platform for multicultural Caribbean identity. Best Band on the Road 1990 and 1991. This year's Panorama tune is *Mr Pannist*.

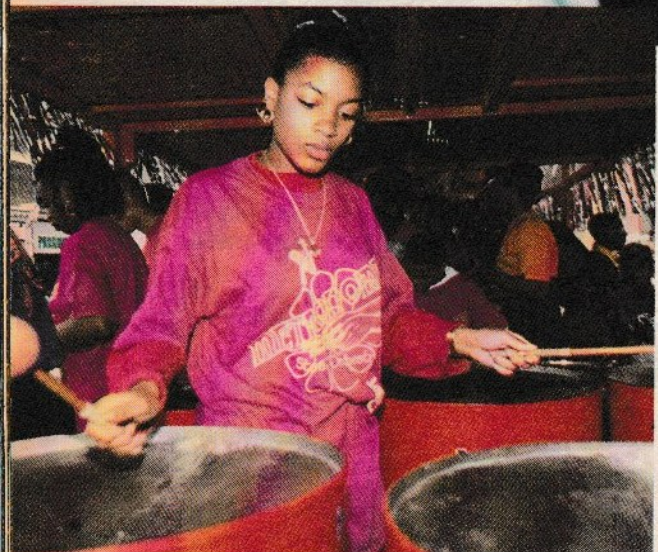
Sliding along to Notting Hill for their 16th year **Glissando** have also taken their steel sounds to Switzerland and Ireland. Led and arranged by Dexter Joseph and fuelled by young blood, this band runs school lessons and weekend classes to recruit new members. After their fourth place in the Panorama last year, Glissando are hoping that this year's tune, *Panic*, pleases the jivers and the judges.



Springer MBE DL. He came to Britain in 1955 from Barbados where he was a deep sea diver and his steelband have been a regular fixture at Notting Hill since 1988. This year they have made a recording and, with a constant stream of new talent from North East London, they look and sound very healthy. Their Carnival '94 show brings arrangements from Ian Beckles and Pedro Burgess and the Panorama tune *Play, Mister Pannist, Play*, after another year of busy touring.

With numerous Notting Hill Carnival appearances to their name, the family band **Stardust** have been on the road for 10 years fulfilling their philosophy of maintaining the art form across generations. Despite their Panorama tune *Don't Ask Me To Play For Carnival*, by Kitchener, a wry dig at the judging system, the band's People First approach promises a performance of youthful energy. Led by Randolph E Baptiste and arranged by Patrick Julien.

■ CLARE RICHARDS



Lambeth Youth have been causing tremors since their formation by Band leader Ricky de Cairos in 1976. The band, with arrangements from Eustace Benjamin, recruit entirely from the South London community. With extensive touring and Carnival credits throughout Europe, LY have a royal performance, a TV appearance and two ARC recordings under their collective belt. In 1994 they'll shake up the scene with *Earthquake*. Force 10 on the Richter scale.

The family backbone of the **London All Stars** continues to be the strength behind the scenes. Steel superstar Roy Rollock came over from Trinidad in 1957, and the Allstars, led by Duchess Rollock and arranged by Frank Rollock, were formed in 1974. On their 20th anniversary, this authentic outfit are not to be missed at Notting Hill. They're playing Kitchener's *Pan Earthquake* this year.

Third in last year's Panorama, Matthew Phillips' **Mangrove** (top right) are ready to settle some scores in 1994. Witness their Panorama title: *Mr Pannist, We're not working for Carnival*, by Kitchener, arrangements by Too Lest, aka Rudy Smith. They're a band in blossom and Mangrove - The Next Generation, their children's band, ensures that they are ongoing and growing.

A tonic for the ears, **Pan Tonic** have a distinguished leader in Sam



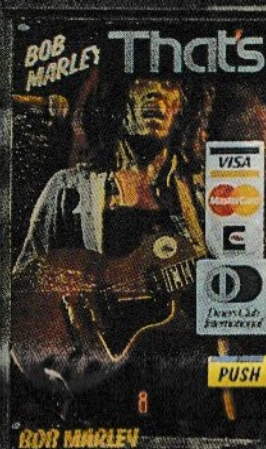


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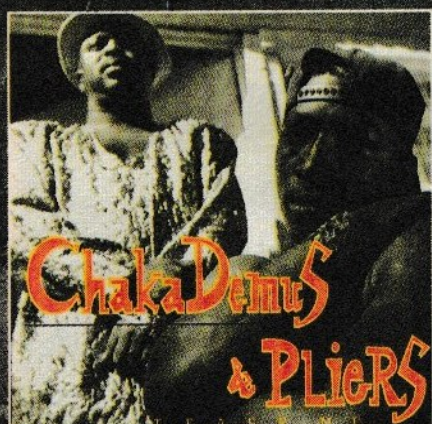
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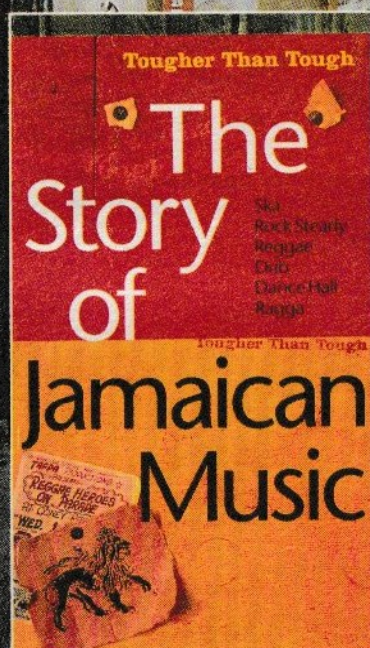
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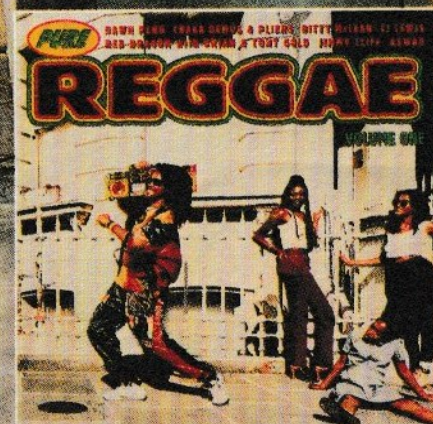
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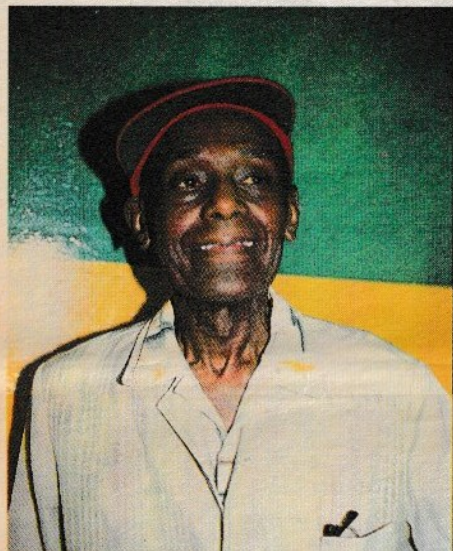
BT *It's good to talk*

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calypsonians

Calypso is the biting, ribald, sarcastic and political voice of Carnival. Its exponents – vying for the title Calypso Monarch – are by turns captivating, inspiring and rude. It's a music that has toppled governments, riled Notting Hill judges and seduced many a tender heart. Beware!

Congos, aka Micheal Friday, came onto the London Calypso circuit from Trinidad 11 years ago and he's still the youngest member of the Touring Tent. The name is derived from his success as a percussionist and calypsos like *Sweet Pot* and



Lady from Japan have set many a crowd swaying in the last few years. This year's *Wan No More* and *Here To Stay* continue that tradition.

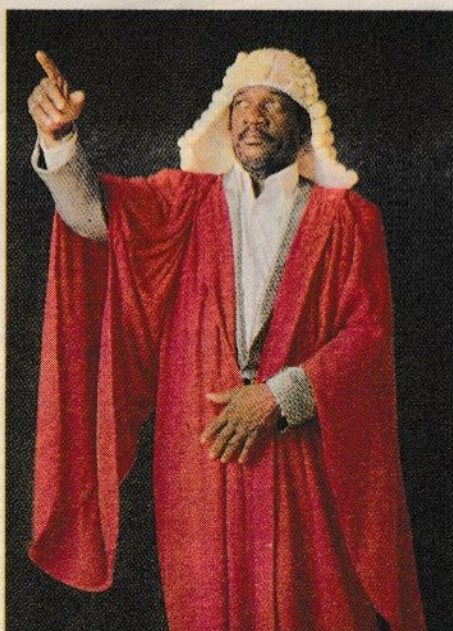
De Prodigal Son otherwise known as Bubbles, is a rare first-timer at Notting Hill. He made his name until now as a steelband performer of considerable talent and has taken up the Calypso cause to preserve the spirit of his ancestors. He's performing *We Jumpin' Tonite* and *De Grand Master* – expect strong passions and commitment.

The reigning King of the Tent and the great-grandfather of British-based Calypsonians, **Golden Cockerel** (above) is still going strong

in his seventies, maintaining the Calypso rhythm. Vivien Comma's music has featured in Hollywood films and his well-known Calypsos include *Millicent*, *I Want You To Love Me*, *Round and Round the Moon*, *Damn Nonsense* and, of course, *Madeline Oy*. This year he's gone topical, with *Lara oh Lara (They Want To Try You For Murder)* and *Carnival Monday is the Ting*.

Originally from St. Lucia, **Dezzy Boy**, aka Conrad Attile is billed as the glamour boy of the Calypso tent. His stage presence gets the crowds moving to sounds like *Nottin Hill Jam* and *Soca Man*. Turn up and do your own Ting.

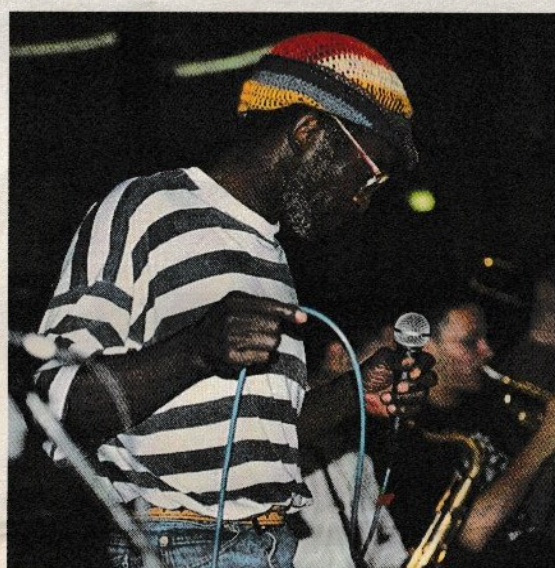
Horace Blake, or **Explorer**, writes all his own material, a comparative rarity among modern Calypsonians. *You Can Make It If You Try* is an uplifting and encouraging composition and *Check Me Out* promotes blatancy. Originally from St Vincent, where he began singing Calypsos and learnt the guitar, this is his seventh year at Notting Hill. It's 20 years since Blake recorded *You*



Are My Everything and since then there's been a debut album, *Sweet Melody* following his annual success at Notting Hill. Check him out.

Errol Brown lives, socialises and plays dominoes in Notting Hill, where he works in a laundry. But as **Lord Cloak** (above) he is a seven-time Calypso Monarch who has for many years brought to Carnival all the wickedness and wit of Calypso in his native Trinidad. Carnival committees, contestants and colleagues; few have escaped his satire, although this year he'll lead off with an affectionate tribute to his friend and compatriot, Boots Davidson, who passed away recently: *Tribute to Boots* is followed by *I Protest*.

Expect some cutting social commentary from Grenada-born **Lucky**, aka Patrick Humphrey, who has carved out a reputation for satirical composition in merciless calypso style. His



Tiger (bottom, far left) performed at the Calypso Review and Victory tents in Trinidad before wielding his satiric sword in London where he was crowned the first Calypso King. Otherwise known as Ashton Moore, his compositions include *Yuh Can't Keep a Good Man Down*, *Message to the Panman* and *Maudlin*.

South Africa is Freedom Today to Live in Love and Peace is a topical Calypso for the year of South Africa's emancipation. **Peace and Love** (left), who goes by no other name, has always performed melodies with a message and this latest composition fits the bill. He began writing songs 25 years ago, was third placed Calypso Monarch in 1983, and has been playing to enthusiastic audiences since 1978. Listen out also for *I Met Annette I Net Her*.

Prince Jacob is the Stateside and Jamaican heir to the Notting Hill Calypso scene. Reaching the majestic heights of King of the Tent in '93, the Prince looks set to claim his inheritance soon. A born Calypsonian, the prince's alter ego, Berris Henriques, composes crowd-pleasers such as *Tent Spectakula*, *Sun People* and *Ja Carnival*.

For six years he's been singing calypso in Britain and **Reverend Sweet Foot**, aka Don Caesar, was a finalist in the Calypso Monarch competition in 1992 and 1993, when he came second to Mighty Tiger. He has put his voice to two albums and is well known for his renditions of *Free the People*, *Come on and Jump on Me* and the bogle-style *Sugar Bum*.

■ CLARE RICHARDS

Calypsos include *Economic Victims*, *Raw Deal* *Dead'ication* and *Woman It's All Right*.

Deryck Neckles grew up singing Calypsos in Grenada, out of earshot of disapproving parents but loud and proud enough to impress the island's famous Drill Yard Tent. Immediately he was picked to sing in the Grenada finals, where he wryly observes that his chances were improved when one of the more seasoned Calypsonians was too drunk to perform at the semi-finals. In England, he changed his sobriquet to **Mighty Astronaut** (below) and in 1991 recorded Soca Jammin Party. Neckles has appeared at Notting Hill nine times, six times as a finalist in the Calypso Monarch contest. This year's Calypsos are *Hit Dem Wid Riddim* and *Agua Mas Agau*.

The top cat of the Calypso tent **Mighty**



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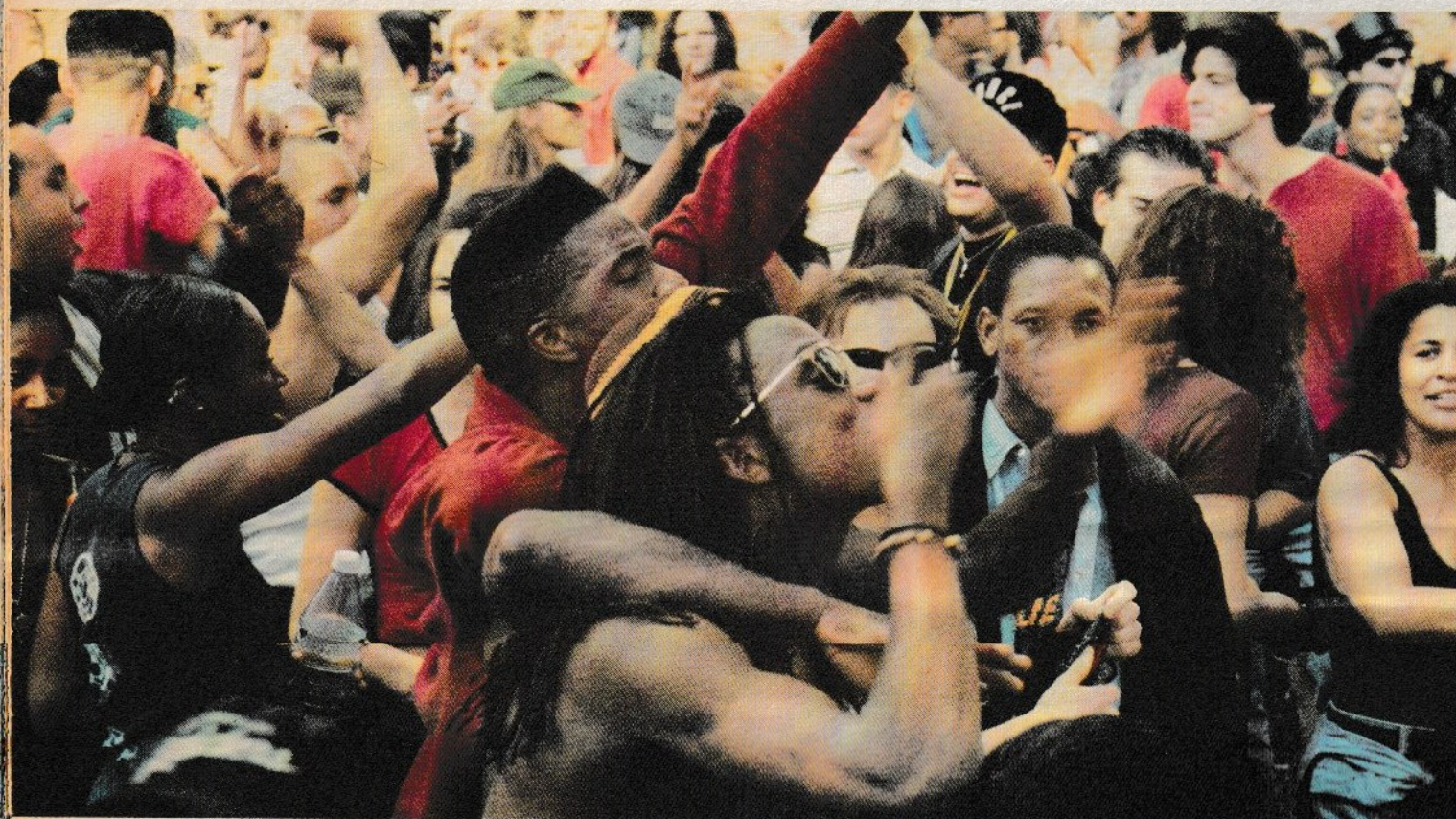
The Cheap Rate period for calls down under now starts at 6pm on weekdays and lasts all weekend.

BT *It's good to talk*

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sound systems

The Sound System, inspired by Jamaica, but with a repertoire that runs from African to zouk, has a bigger presence than ever at Notting Hill. House, hip-hop, jungle and jazz. It's all here for '94. Each system has its own location, so take the journey through the corridors of Carnival and a voyage into sound...



Tavistock Road, the Southside, and the vibes'll be lickin' thru the crowd already. **Special FX 247**, a three man crew of Mikey J, Captain and H, kick up a dance with sounds from soul and reggae to calypso, soca and rarer grooves, but their best is the wicked revive selection. Check them out when the lights go down.

Movin' on, you'll hit the sound of **Sir Lloyd** (MCs: Sir Lloyd, Spike Milligan, Colonel Flux, Beva Irie, Foreigner and Mr B) whose Carnival is about ragga, soul, soca and classic dance tracks. If you're into the rave tip, big house lover and the - massive - junglist moves, then check out **CMC Roadshow** with DJ Wax, Trans-Mixer and DST.

Shake a leg, too, to the rare groove selection kicking out of **Killawatt**. They're Diamond Touch, playing his speciality dancehall music, Kiss FM's Fat Freddie M, with soulful tricks, and TG and Dixie Peach swaying the crowd. This crew of selectors pride themselves on playing the biggest, widest and wildest variety of sounds and it's good.

All Saints Road starts off with **One Love** and nuff respect still to their One Love and Unity - No Animosity! slogan. This year, they're Donn Campbell, General Saint, Michael Prophet and many many more. Check out the big response from the crowd when Sweetie Irie licks out *Slim Body Girls* and *G Spot*.

Also at All Saints, **Sufferers** are presenting their summertime specials of reggae, soul and soca. Their MCs and DJs include Little Lee, Fats, Skanker, Nightlife and Wappy. Little Lee has just returned from tour with the one and only Shabba Ranks, so be sure to listen out

for him. And for those that *lurve* a bit of upfront boogie, jazz, funk, soul and new jack swing, check the most popular and established sounds in European dance music: **Rappattack**. Nuff celebrity guests here.

Taking over the decks on St Lukes Road is the fiercest of jungle music, mix in hardcore, house and garage. **Confusion** take great pride in having dropped the first junglist tunes at Carnival two years back. Now they're eight sounds fronted by DJ Magic, X-Dream, T-Roy, Gadget, Pisces, Molsey, Corflex and full crew.

Onto Westbourne Park and tings are really jumpin'. **Channel One Hi-Power** are there playing their roots, reggae and soul. Next door are a busy crew called **This Generation** with KD Tems and E-Q profile lickin' out the big lyrics and slick sounds of everything from reggae to soul, soca to rap and jungle classics: Dem cater for the youths to the old. Chill it.

Now to the sweet vocal sounds of R Kelly where crowds'll be bumpin' and grindin' to all tracks, flowing back and forth to the sounds of DJs Kenneth and Andrew Batchelor, Kirk B and Noel Nelson from **New Dimensions**. And for something a bit more fierce, **Metro Glory** with ragga, hip-hop and jungle tunes by Frisco Kip. Concrete Junglist and full crew'll play *Rumours in Sky*, one of their rollin' bassline sounds.

Just round the corner on Talbot Road are rootical sound **JAH Observer**, one of the last of the late great sound systems, and **Obsession** where Webster, Colin, Carl and Tony play their Number One soul, swing and jungle tracks from General Levy to Buju Banton.

For the youth crowd, there's Top Lady Rapper PA MC Ni - with **Fun Bunch** - playing all those tunes to hit the right spot. DJs are Dentan, JB and Daz. Guaranteed top PAs all day.

Gradually building up the vibe at Ledbury Road for the past four years, **Bass By Any Means Necessary** play only the funkiest selection from rap to salsa, Brazilian thru soca and reggae. London Radio DJ David R Boland, DJ Pete Bond, and Harry 'The Mania' Davis are welding the decks with Crooklynd Dodgers, the JB's, Banda Black Rio and Fruko Y Sus Teso.

The Best Dressed Sound System of 1993 are on Talbot Road. **Gaz's Rocking Blues** are a sight not to be missed. Gaz argues he has the world's largest collection of ska and his brother Jason Mayal has brought his monster box of Latin rhythms from the Colombian coast. Close by, **Shock** are now playing swing, house, soul and rap, deejayed by Stan, Dean and Cecil. They were the pioneers of house playing Carnival from back in '83' and are known for adding a element of surprise to their act.

Head to Powis Gardens to check **Ravers Delight** who are spinning discs from Top Cat's *Over U Body* to Buju's *Champion*. The crew, Andy the Master, Mr T, Silver and Selector C are proud to be part of Carnival and show it.

Serious summer madness? Get to the 101% entertainment from **Nasty Love**'s Slim, Gasser Blue, Thriller George, Robert Sean, Seth Mac 10, Brando and crew. Girls are flexin' with some of that lyrics. **KCC and the Rocking Crew** are usually busy playing

circuit up and down country but they'll be there at Blenheim Crescent, a house and garage team with UK guests and American DJ's.

Down Ladbroke Grove **Lord Jelly Musicals Studio** - with DJs Super G, Glamour G, Special Brew and Hollywood - are boasting that they're the smoothest, nastiest, the greatest and biggest sound in South London. Big claim and you'll have to check that one out for yourself. Besides, next door trying to fight back are **Virgo International** with their sounds of soca, soul, revival and reggae.

A little education down Lawrence Street, where **Level Vibes** - with famed DJs Daddy Terry, Master P and Randy P - play an electrifying mixture of tropical music. Then a little respect. Zouk sound system **Bipa** have been involved with benefit concerts like the ANC Party and Arafest but their biggest buzz, they say, is taking part in Europe's number one festival.

Giving Latin music the higher profile are **Latin Rave** on Portobello Road where Sylvester and Dominique'll be playing loud and proud after all their successes at Carnival. Meanwhile, **Mellowtone** are doing some seriously shameless mixing from their reggae and soul tracks from *Weak* by SWV to *Murderer* from Buju Banton.

Mastermind definitely know how to handle a crowd with their swing and funk, while **Goodtimes Roadshow** on West Row are fronted by a real man of the world in DJ Norman. He and Joey J like hearing all about their improved sound in all its glory.

Bassmasters were joint winners of the award for Best Decorated Sound at last year's Carnival and are on South Row this year with guest DJs Norris Windross, Vince Bourne, Darren Pearce, Christopher Tavokilly and more. Their untouchable basslines pump through more than nuff house and dance music.

Away from the house and dance scene, on East Row, the conscious lyrics of Dub and Roots'll play out from **Tremor**. Orange the Selector, Red Eye, and Jah Free choose the dub plates with lyrics of correctness.

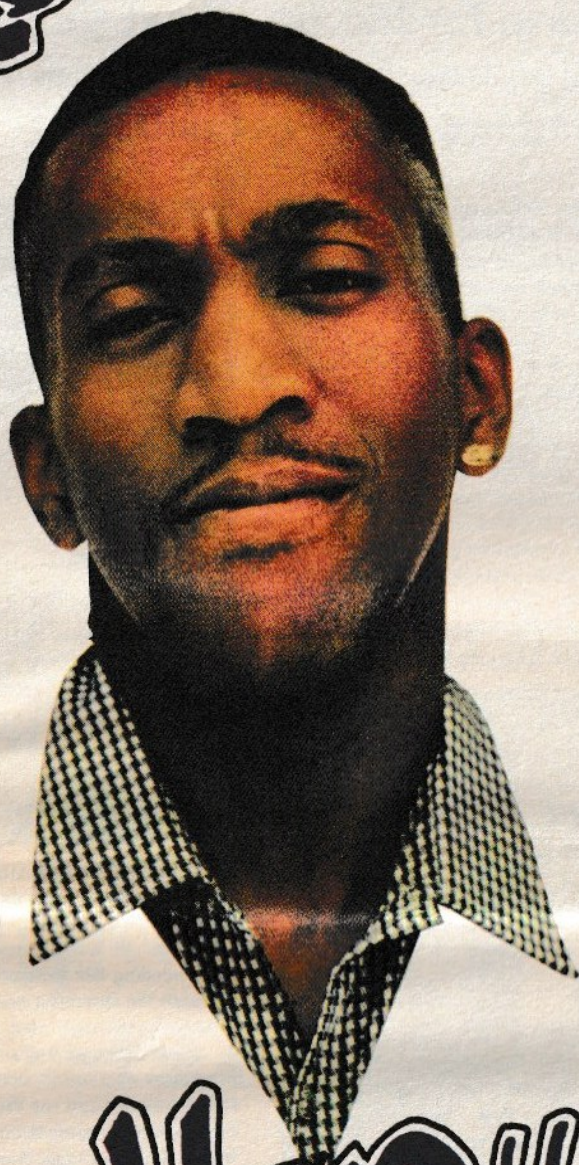
At Appleford Road is the sound for 1994. **Saxon** are also England's most travelled and notorious sound, unchallenged by anything in New York, Miami, Jamaica or Europe. Out there running the show are Musclehead, Miny Muscle, Trevor Sax, and H, mixin' all their dancehall hits with their exclusive special workings. They'll be playing reggae artists Shabba, Buju and Ninja man. Respect in every aspect.

Golborne Gardens means the non-stop spinning discs of **French Caribbes**. Just round the corner are **Aba Shanti**, a sound set up to teach Rastafari: listen out for Dubjaddah and Blackmix, playing cultural sounds giving thanks and praise. Likewise, promoting reggae over the globe is **Lepke**. They keep the crowds lively with tracks from Bob Marley to General Degree.

The sounds of **Chemist** is where MCs Fat Shaw, Bigger World, Tony Ranks and Super B play the sweet vibrations of soul. **Music Incorporated** head the best of the rest, with DJs Tony Tee, Daddy Hubbie, and General Irie, plus guests like Family Attraction and Ash-Skyline. There's more, too: Irini, Sinclair, Everis, Sylvia Tella are well worth catching. It'll be some party.

■ HEATHER BREWER

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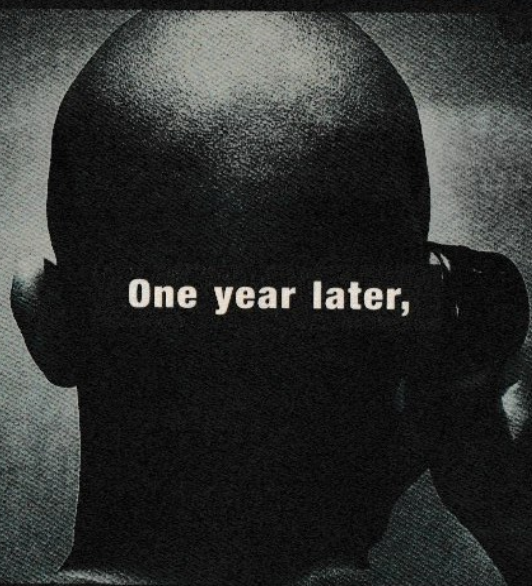
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soca sounds

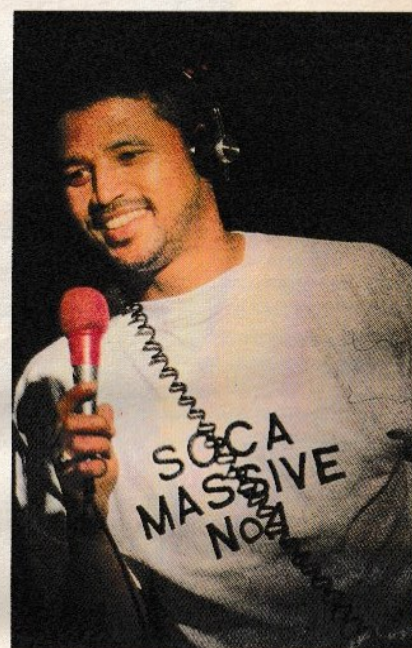
Soca is the fusion of modern soul and old-style Calypso. Generators the size of saloon cars purr down the road to compete for the title Best Soca-on-the-Move sound. A music to motor many a winding hip this weekend...

Names such as **Soca Fusion**, **Soca Soldier**, **Renegades**, **Mighty Invaders**, **Paradise Sound** and **Shadow Hi-Fi**

reflect the diversity of the current Soca scene and membership of the Caribbean Music Association. Energy is what counts.

Soca Massive (right), led by Michael Olton, are the biggest sound on the scene: a group of DJs collaborating to produce the dynamically re-engineered blend that is considered their trademark. They tour all year and have won the Soca-on-the-Move competition a record six years, including the last three. Celebrating their 10th birthday.

Caribbean Reunion Club's **Lord Sam**, De Socalypso Pioneer (below), has been decorated with Trinidad's highest honour for



services to music. He's steering his sounds round Notting Hill for the 20th year, playing *Don't Stop De Carnival* by de Mighty Sparrow. This year his jump leads are attached to South Connections mas band.

Bambino (below right), otherwise known as Antonn McCalla, is, as ever, wining along with his special brew of hard-core Soca incorporating a mixture of dance, garage and jungle. His sound is hot on the tail of the Stardust mas and pan band. Bambino's personal philosophy: If It Moves, Wine On It. Don't argue with those shorts.

If your pulse is ticking over a little slowly, listen out for Ken Youngblood, a Notting Hill veteran of 10 years. He'll send Soca through your veins with his **Essence of Soca**. Pure and unrefined.

East Caribbean States feature top artists from all over the Caribbean, plus the UK's highly rated Soca and Zouk band Nouveau. Coming out with their own theme this year - *Back To Basics*. One to catch.

T+T Posse, a decade in the business, recharge their batteries between Trinidad and Notting Hill every year, increasing the voltage each time. Tune in to *Sparrow*, *Super Blue*, *Iwer George*, *Chandelier*, *Luther*.

Turn on to **Sounds Unlimited**, merging and diverging from Soca to Chutney. Coming out with *Coffee Boys*.

Southall-based **Majestic** started out as

a party sound but now mix on a larger scale to give de people what dey want: Soca, ragga, jungle, soul, zouk. You got it.

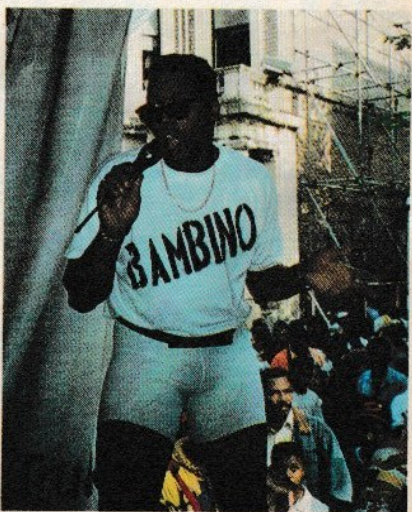
If you still want more then Sir Walter Riley, heading **Sir Valdez**, will be coming out with the Dominica mas band. Liberal doses of ragga, soca, soul, jungle, zouk.

Close encounters also between **Magnum** soca sound, with 20 years Notting Hill experience and the West Indian Development Organisation mas band. DJ Master T has over two decades experience at Notting Hill and is dedicated to the community spirit of soca in Acton.

Jockeys Fats (soca) and Paget (ragga) are the **Mangrove** men mixing the grooves. They pride themselves on their diversity and will be playing soca with substance.

Listen out for **Twylite Experience** as the day draws on and melt down with **Hot Wax**, 100 degrees and rising. DJ G and Crazy Eddie are heating up the sounds this year with *Jump up and Wave*, *Ragga Boom Boom*, and *O.P.P. in the Party*. Sweat-sensitive people steer clear. Soca it up.

■ CLARE RICHARDS



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